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Rev^d *LAURENCE STERNE. A.M.*
Prebendary of York.

LETTERS
OF THE LATE
Rev. Mr. LAURENCE STERNE,
TO
HIS MOST INTIMATE FRIENDS,
ON VARIOUS OCCASIONS,
AS PUBLISHED BY HIS DAUGHTER
MRS. MEDALLE AND OTHERS:
AND INCLUDING THE
LETTERS BETWEEN YORICK AND ELIZA.
TO WHICH ARE ADDED,
An Appendix of XXXII. Letters, never
printed before;
A FRAGMENT in the Manner of RABELAIS;
AND THE
HISTORY OF A WATCH-COAT,
WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

Containing STERNE's Letters to his Friends,
and the Fragment.

VIENNA:

Printed for R. SAMMER, Bookseller.
M. DCC. XCVII.

LETTERS
OF THE LATE
REV. MR. LAURENCE STERNE
TO
HIS MOST INTIMATE FRIENDS,
PUBLISHED BY HIS DAUGHTER,
L. S. DE MEDALLE,
JUNE, M. DCC. LXXV.

Sterne's Letters.

A

LETTERS

OF THE LATE

Rt. Mr. LAURENCE STERNE

TO

HIS MOST INTIMATE FRIENDS,

FURNISHED BY HIS DAUGHTER,

L. S. DE MEDALLÉ.

JUNE, M. DCC. LXXXV.

Printed by J. Johnson, St. Paul's Church-Yard.

DEDICATION.

TO DAVID GARRICK, ESQ.

WHEN I was asked to whom I should dedicate this volume, I carelessly answered to no one—Why not? (replied the person who put the question to me,) Because most dedications look like begging a protection to the book. Perhaps a worse interpretation may be given to it. No, no! already so much obliged, I cannot, will not, put another tax upon the generosity of any friend of Mr. Sterne's, or mine. I went home to my lodgings, and gratitude warmed my heart to such a pitch, that I vowed it should be dedicated to the man my father so much admired—who, with an unprejudiced eye, read, and ap-

proved his works, and moreover loved the man—'Tis to Mr. Garrick then, that I dedicate these Genuine Letters.

Can I forget the sweet * Epitaph which proved Mr. Garrick's friendship, and opinion of him? 'Twas a tribute to friendship—and as a tribute of my gratitude I dedicate this volume to a man of understanding and feeling—Receive this, as it is meant—

* Shall Pride a heap of sculptur'd marble
raise,
Some worthless, un-mourn'd titled fool to
praise;
And shall we not by one poor grave-stone
learn,
Where Genius, Wit, and Humour, sleep
with *Sterne*?

D. G.

Mr. Sterne was born at Clonmel, in Ireland, November 24, 1713; and died, in London March 18, 1768.

DEDICATION. 5

May you, dear Sir, approve of these letters, as much as Mr. Sterne admired you—but Mr. Garrick, with all his urbanity, can never carry the point half so far, for Mr. Sterne was an enthusiast, if it is possible to be one, in favour of Mr. Garrick.

This may appear a very simple dedication, but Mr. Garrick will judge by his own sensibility, that I can feel more than I can express, and I believe he will give me credit for all my grateful acknowledgments.

I am, with every sentiment of gratitude, and esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your obliged
humble Servant,

London

June, 1775.

Lydia Sterne de Medalle.

P R E F A C E.

IN publishing these Letters the Editor does but comply with her mother's request, which was, that if any letters were published under Mr. Sterne's name, that those she had in her possession, (as well as those that her father's friends would be kind enough to send to her) should be likewise published—She depends much on the candour of the public for the favourable reception of them,—their being genuine, she thinks, and hopes, will render them not unacceptable—She has already experienced much benevolence and generosity from her late father's friends—the remembrance of which will ever warm her heart with gratitude!

STERNE'S LETTERS

TO HIS FRIENDS.

LETTER I*.

TO MISS L—.

YES! I will steal from the world, and not a babbling tongue shall tell where I am—Echo shall not so much as whisper my hiding-place—Suffer thy imagination to paint it as a little sun-gilt cottage on the side of a romantic hill—dost thou think I will leave love and friendship behind me? No! they shall be my companions in solitude, for they will sit down and rise up with me in the amiable form of my

* Mrs. LYDIA STERNE MEDALLE informs us that this and the three following Letters were written by her father to Mrs. Sterne when she was in Staffordshire, before her marriage to him; and adds, that she publishes them, in justice to Mr. Sterne's delicate feelings, and that „a good heart breathes in every line of them.”

L— —we will be as merry and as innocent as our first parents in Paradise, before the arch fiend entered that undescribable scene.

The kindest affections will have room to shoot and expand in our retirement, and produce such fruit, as madness, and envy, and ambition have always killed in the bud.—Let the human tempest and hurricane rage at a distance, the desolation is beyond the horizon of peace.—My L. has seen a Polyanthus blow in December—some friendly wall has sheltered it from the biting wind.—No planetary influence shall reach us, but that which presides over and cherishes the sweetest flowers. God preserve us, how delightful this prospect in idea! We will build, and we will plant, in our own way—simplicity shall not be tortured by art—we will learn of Nature how to live—she shall be our alchymist, to mingle all the good of life into one salubrious draught.—The gloomy family of care and distrust shall be banished from our dwelling, guarded by thy kind and tutelar deity—we will sing our choral songs of gratitude, and rejoice to the end of our pilgrimage.

Adieu, my L!—Return to one who languishes for thy society.

L. STERNE.

LETTER II.

TO THE SAME.

YOU bid me tell you, my dear L. how I bore your departure for S—, and whether the valley where D'Estella stands retains still its looks—or if I think the roses or jessamines smell as sweet as when you left it—Alas! every thing has now lost its relish and look! The hour you left D'Estella I took to my bed—I was worn-out with fevers of all kinds, but most by that fever of the heart with which thou knowest well I have been wasting these two years—and shall continue wasting 'till you quit S——. The good Miss S—, from the forebodings of the best of hearts, thinking I was ill, insisted upon my going to her. What can be the cause, my dear L. that I never have been able to see the face of this mutual friend, but I feel myself rent

to pieces? She made me stay an hour with her, and in that short space I burst into tears a dozen different times—and in such affectionate gusts of passion, that she was constrained to leave the room, and sympathize in her dressing-room—I have been weeping for you both, said she, in a tone of the sweetest pity—For poor L's heart, I have long known it—her anguish is as sharp as yours—her heart as tender—her constancy as great—her virtues as heroic—Heaven brought you not together to be tormented. I could only answer her with a kind look, and a heavy sigh—and returned home to your lodgings (which I have hired 'till your return) to resign myself to misery—Fanny had prepared me a supper—she is all attention to me—but I sat over it with tears; a bitter sauce, my L. but I could eat it with no other—for the moment she began to spread my little table, my heart fainted within me.—One solitary plate, one knife, one fork, one glass!—I gave a thousand pensive, penetrating looks at the chair thou hadst so often graced in those quiet and sentimental repasts—then laid down my knife and fork,

and took out my handkerchief, and clapped it across my face, and wept like a child.—I do so this very moment, my L. for as I take up my pen, my poor pulse quickens, my pale face glows, and tears are trickling down upon the paper, as I trace the word L— —. O thou! blessed in thyself, and in thy virtues—blessed to all that know thee—to me most so, because more do I know of thee than all thy sex. This is the philtre, my L. by which thou hast charmed me, and by which thou wilt hold me thine whilst virtue and faith hold this world together. This, my friend, is the plain and simple magick by which I told Miss— —I have won a place in that heart of thine, on which I depend so satisfied, that time, or distance, or change of every thing which might alarm the hearts of little men, create no uneasy suspense in mine—Wast thou to stay in S— —these seven years, thy friend, though he would grieve, scorns to doubt, or to be doubted—'tis the only exception where security is not the parent of danger. I told you poor Fanny was all attention to me since your departure—contrives every day bring-

ing in the name of L. She told me last night (upon giving me some hartshorn) she had observed my illness began the very day of your departure for S— —; that I had never held up my head, had seldom, or scarce ever smiled, had fled from all society—that she verily believed I was broken-hearted, for she had never entered the room, or passed by the door, but she heard me sigh heavily—that I neither eat, or slept, or took pleasure in any thing as before;—judge then, my L. can the valley look so well—or the roses and jessamines smell so sweet as heretofore? Ah me! But adieu—the vesper bell calls me from thee to my God!

L. STERNE.

LETTER III.

TO THE SAME.

BEFORE now my L. has lodged an indictment against me in the high court of Friendship—I plead guilty to the charge, and entirely submit to the mercy of that

amiable tribunal.—Let this mitigate my punishment, if it will not expiate my transgression—do not say that I shall offend again in the same manner, though a too easy pardon sometimes occasions a repetition of the same fault. A miser says, Though I do no good with my money to-day, to-morrow shall be marked with some deed of beneficence. The libertine says, Let me enjoy this week in forbidden and luxurious pleasures, and the next I will dedicate to serious thought and reflection. The gamester says, Let me have one more chance with the dice, and I will never touch them more. The knave of every profession wishes to obtain but independency, and he will become an honest man. The female coquette triumphs in tormenting her inamorato, for fear, after marriage, he should not pity her.

Thy apparition of the fifth instant (for letters may almost be called so) proved more welcome, as I did not expect it. Oh! my L— —, thou art kind indeed to make an apology for me, and thou never wilt assuredly repent of one act of kindness—for being thy debtor, I will pay thee

with interest. Why does my L. complain of the desertion of friends?—Where does the human being live that will not join in this complaint?—It is a common observation, and perhaps too true, that married people seldom extend their regards beyond their own fire-side. There is such a thing as parsimony in esteem, as well as money—yet as the one costs nothing, it might be bestowed with more liberality. We cannot gather grapes from thorns, so we must not expect kind attachments from persons who are wholly folded up in selfish schemes. I do not know whether I most despise or pity such characters—Nature never made an unkind creature—ill usage and bad habits have deformed a fair and lovely creation.

My L!—thou art surrounded by all the melancholy gloom of winter; wert thou alone, the retirement would be agreeable. Disappointed ambition might envy such a retreat, and disappointed love would seek it out. Crouded towns, and busy societies, may delight the unthinking and the gay—but solitude is the best nurse of wisdom. Methinks I see my contemplative girl now

in the garden, watching the gradual approaches of spring. Dost not thou mark with delight the first vernal buds? The snow-drop and primrose, these early and welcome visitors, spring beneath thy feet. Flora and Pomona already consider thee as their handmaid; and in a little time will load thee with their sweetest blessings. The feathered race are all thy own, and with them untaught harmony will soon begin to cheer thy morning and evening walks. Sweet as this may be, return—return—the birds of Yorkshire will tune their pipes, and sing as melodiously as those of Staffordshire.

Adieu, my beloved L!—Thine too much for my *peace*.

L. STERNE.

LETTER IV.

TO THE SAME.

I HAVE offended her whom I so tenderly love!—What could tempt me to it! But if a beggar was to knock at thy gate, wouldst thou not open the door, and be

melted with compassion? I know thou wouldst, for Pity has erected a temple in thy bosom. Sweetest and best of all human passions! let thy web of tenderness cover the pensive form of affliction, and soften the darkest shades of misery! I have reconsidered this apology, and, alas! what will it accomplish? Arguments, however finely spun, can never change the nature of things—Very true—so a truce with them.

I have lost a very valuable friend by a sad accident, and what is worse, he has left a widow and five young children to lament this sudden stroke.—If real usefulness and integrity of heart could have secured him from this, his friends would not now be mourning his untimely fate. These dark and seemingly cruel dispensations of Providence often make the best of human hearts complain. Who can paint the distress of an affectionate mother, made a widow in a moment, weeping in bitterness over a numerous, helpless, and fatherless offspring?—God! these are thy chastisements, and require (hard task!) a pious acquiescence.

Forgive me this digression, and allow

me to drop a tear over a departed friend; and what is more excellent, an honest man. My L! thou wilt feel all that kindness can inspire in the death of — — The event was sudden, and thy gentle spirit would be more alarmed on that account. But my L. thou hast less to lament, as old age was creeping on, and her period of doing good, and being useful, was nearly over. At sixty years of age the tenement gets fast out of repair, and the lodger with anxiety thinks of a discharge. In such a situation the poet might well say,

„The soul uneasy, etc.”

My L. talks of leaving the country—may a kind angel guide thy steps hither! Solitude at length grows tiresome. Thou sayst thou wilt quit the place with regret—I think so too.—Does not something uneasy mingle with the very reflections of leaving it? It is like parting with an old friend, whose temper and company one has long been acquainted with. I think I see you looking twenty times a day at the house—almost counting every brick and pane of glass, and telling them at the same time

with a sigh, you are going to leave them. Oh happy modification of matter! they will remain insensible of thy loss. But how wilt thou be able to part with thy garden? —The recollection of so many pleasing walks must have endeared it to you. The trees, the shrubs, the flowers, which thou rearest with thy own hands—will they not droop and fade away sooner upon thy departure? Who will be the successor to nurse them in thy absence? Thou wilt leave thy name upon the myrtle-tree. If trees, and shrubs, and flowers, could compose an elegy, I should expect a very plaintive one upon this subject.

Adieu, adieu! Believe me ever, ever thine,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R V.

TO S— C—, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

London, Christmas Day.

I HAVE been in such a continual hurry since the moment I arrived here—what

with my books, and what with visitors and visitings, that it was not in my power sooner to sit down and acknowledge the favour of your obliging letter; and to thank you for the most friendly motives which led you to write it. I am not much in pain upon what gives my kind friends at Stillington so much on the chapter of *Noses*—because, as the principal satire throughout that part is levelled at those learned block-heads who, in all ages, have wasted their time and much learning upon points as foolish—it shifts off the idea of what you fear, to another point—and 'tis thought here very good—'twill pass muster—I mean not with all—No—no! I shall be attacked and pelted, either from cellars or garrets, write what I will—and besides, must expect to have a party against me of many hundreds—who either do not—or will not laugh. 'Tis enough if I divide the world; at least I will rest contented with it. I wish you was here to see what changes of looks and political reasoning have taken place in every company and coffee-house since last year; we shall be soon Prussians and Anti-Prussians, B—s and Anti-B—s,

and those distinctions will just do as well as Whig and Tory—and for aught I know serve the same ends. The K. seems resolved to bring all things back to their original principles, and to stop the torrent of corruption and laziness.—He rises every morning at six to do business—rides out at eight to a minute, returns at nine to give himself up to his people. By persisting, 'tis thought he will oblige his M—s and dependants to dispatch affairs with him many hours sooner than of late—and 'tis much to be questioned whether they will not be enabled to wait upon him sooner by being freed from long levees of their own, and applications, which will in all likelihood be transferred from them directly to himself—the present system being to remove that phalanx of great people which stood betwixt the throne and the subjects, and suffer them to have immediate access without the intervention of a Cabal—(this is the language of others): however, the K. gives every thing himself, knows every thing, and weighs every thing maturely, and then is inflexible—this puts old stagers off their game—how it will end we are all in the dark.

'Tis fear'd the war is quite over in Germany; never was known such havock amongst troops—I was told yesterday by a Colonel, from Germany, that out of two battalions of nine hundred men, to which he belong'd, but seventy-one left! —P — —F — — has sent word, 'tis said, that he must have forty thousand men directly sent to take the field—and with provisions for them too, for he can but subsist them for a fortnight—I hope this will find you all got to York.—I beg my compliments to the amiable Mrs. Croft, etc. etc.

Though I purposed going first to Golden Square, yet fate has thus long disposed of me—so I have never been able to set a foot towards that quarter.

J am, dear Sir,

Your's affectionately

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R VI.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAVE just time to acknowledge the favour of yours, but not to get the two prints you mention—which shall be sent you by next post—I have bought them, and lent them to Miss Gilbert, but will assuredly send for them and enclose them to you.—I will take care to get your pictures well copied, and at a moderate price. And if I can be of further use, I beseech you to employ me; and from time to time will send you an account of whatever may be worth transmitting.—The stream now sets in strong against the German war. Loud complaints of———making a trade of the war, etc. etc. Much expected from Ld. G——'s evidence to these matters, who is expected every hour.—The K. wins every day upon the people, shews himself much at the play, (but at no opera) rides out with his brothers every morning, half an hour after

seven till nine—returns with them—spends an hour with them at breakfast, and chat—and then sits down to business. I never dined at home once since I arrived—am fourteen dinners deep engaged just now, and fear matters will be worse with me in that point than better.—As to the main points in view, at which you hint—all I can say is, that I see my way, and unless Old Nick throws the dice—shall, in due time, come off winner.—Tristram will be out the twentieth—There is a great rout made about him before he enters the stage—whether this will be of use or no, I cannot say—Some wits of the first magnitude here, both as to wit and station, engage me success—time will shew—Adieu, dear Sir! and with my compliments to Mrs. Croft, etc.

I am your affectionate
and obliged

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R VII.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR,

I THIS moment received the favour of your kind letter.—The letter in the Lady's Magazine about me was wrote by the noted Dr. H—, who wrote the Inspector, and undertakes that Magazine—The people of York are very uncharitable to suppose any man so gross a beast as to pen such a character of himself.—In this great town no soul ever suspected it, for a thousand reasons—Could they suppose I should be such a fool as to fall foul upon Dr. W—n, my best friend, by representing him so weak a man—or by telling such a lye of him—as his giving me a purse to buy off his tutorship for Tristram?—or I should be fool enough to own I had taken his purse for that purpose?

You must know there is a quarrel between Dr. H— —and Dr. M—y, who was the physician meant at Mr. C— —S— —'s, and Dr. H— —has changed the place on

purpose to give M—y a lick—Now that conversation (though perhaps true) yet happened at another place, and with another physician; which I have contradicted in this city for the honour of my friend M—y, all which shews the absurdity of York credulity and nonsense. Besides, the account is full of falsehoods.—First, with regard to the place of my birth, which was at C—, in Ireland—The story of a hundred pounds to Mrs. W—, not true, or of a *pension promised*; the merit of which I disclaimed—and indeed there are so many other things so untrue, and unlikely to come from me, that the worst enemy I have here never had a suspicion—and to end all, Dr. H—owns the paper.

I shall be down before May is out—I preach before the Judges on Sunday—my sermons come out on Thursday after—and I purpose the Monday at furthest after that to set out for York—I have bought a pair of horses for that purpose—My best respects to your lady—

I am, dear Sir,

Your most obliged and faithful

L. STERNE.

P. S. I beg pardon for this hasty scrawl, having just come from a concert where the D—of Y— —performed—I have received great notice from him, and last week had the honour of supping with him.

L E T T E R VIII.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR,

SINCE I had the favour of your obliging letter, nothing has happened or been said one day, which has not been contradicted the next; so having little certain to write, I have forbore writing at all, in hopes every day of something worth filling up a letter. We had the greatest expectations yesterday that ever were raised, of a pitched battle in the H— —of C— —, where Mr. P— —was to have entered and thrown down the gauntlet, in defence of the German war.—There never was so full a house—the gallery full to the top—I was there all the day—when, lo! a political fit of the gout seized the great combatant—he entered not the lists—B—got

up, and begged the House, as he saw not his right honourable friend there, to put off the debate—It could not be done: so B——rose up, and made a most long, passionate, incoherent speech, in defence of the Germanic war—but very severe upon the unfrugal manner it was carried on—in which he addressed himself principally to the C——of the E——, and laid him on terribly.—It seems the Chancery of Hanover had laid out 350,000 pounds on account, and brought in our Treasury debtor—and the grand debate was for an honest examination of the particulars of this extravagant account, and for vouchers to authenticate it.—L——answered B—— very rationally and coolly—Lord N. spoke long—Sir F. D——maintained the German war was most pernicious—Mr. C——, of Surry, spoke well against the account, with some others—L. B——n at last got up, and spoke half an hour with great plainness and temper—explained a great many hidden springs relating to these accounts in favour of the late K.—and told two or three conversations which had passed between the K. and himself re-

lative to these expences—which cast great honour on the K's. character. This was with regard to the money the K. had secretly furnished out of his pocket to lessen the account of the Hanoverscore brought us to discharge.

B — — d and B — — n abused all who fought for peace, and joined in the cry for it; and B — — d added, that the reasons of wishing a peace now, were the same as at the peace of Utrecht—that the people behind the curtain could not both maintain the war and their places too, so were for making another sacrifice of the nation to their own interests. — After all—the cry for a peace is so general, that it will certainly end in one. Now for myself.—

One half of the town abuse my book as bitterly as the other half cry it up to the skies—the best is, they abuse and buy it, and at such a rate, that we are going on with a second edition as fast as possible.

I am going down for a day or two with Mr. Spencer to Wimbledon. On Wednesday there is to be a grand assembly at Lady N — —. I have inquired every where

about Stephen's affair, and can hear nothing—My friend Mr. Charles T— will be now Secretary of War—he bid me wish him joy of it, though not in possession.—I will ask him—and depend, my most worthy friend, that you shall not be ignorant of what I learn from him—Believe me ever, ever,

Your's,

L. S.

L E T T E R IX.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR SIR,

A STRAIN which I got in my wrist by a terrible fall prevented my acknowledging the favour of your obliging letter. I went yesterday morning to breakfast with Mr. V—, who is a kind of righthand man to the Secretary, on purpose to inquire about the propriety, or feasibility, of doing what you wish me—and he has told me an anecdote which, had you been here, would, I think, have made it wiser to have deferred speaking about the

affair a month hence than now ; it is this — You must know that the numbers of officers who have left their regiments in Germany for the pleasures of the town, have been a long topic for merriment ; as you see them in St. James's coffee-house, and the park, every hour, inquiring, open mouth, how things go on in Germany, and what news ? — when they should have been there to have furnished news themselves — But the worst part has been, that many of them have left their brother officers on their duty, and in all the fatigues of it, and have come with no end but to make friends to be put unfairly over the *heads of those* who were left risking *their lives*. In this attempt there have been some but too successful, which has justly raised ill-blood and complaints from the officers who staid behind — the upshot has been, that they have every soul been ordered off, and woe be to him ('tis said) who shall be found listening. Now just to mention our friend's case whilst this cry is on foot, I think would be doing more hurt than good ; but if you think otherwise, I will go with all my heart

and mention it to Mr. T — —, for to do more I am too inconsiderable a person to pretend to.—You made me and my friends here very merry with the accounts current at York, of my being forbid the Court—but they do not consider what a considerable person they make of me, when they suppose either my going or my not going there, is a point that ever enters the K's head—and for those about him, I have the honour either to stand so personally well known to them, or to be so well represented by those of the first rank, as to fear no accident of that kind.

I thank God (B — —'s excepted) I have never yet made a friend or connexion I have forfeited, or done aught to forfeit—but on the contrary, my true character is better understood; and where I had one friend last year who did me honour, I have three now.—If my enemies knew that by this rage of abuse and ill-will they were effectually serving the interests both of myself and works, they would be more quiet—but it has been the fate of my betters, who have found that the way to fame is like the way to heaven—through

much tribulation — and till I shall have the honour to be as much mal-treated as Rabelais and Swift were, I must continue humble; for I have not filled up the measure of half their *persecutions*.

The Court is turning topsy-turvy. Lord B — — e, le premier — Lord T — t to be groom of the chambers in room of the D — of R — — d — Lord H — — x to Ireland — Sir F. D — — d in T — — 's place — P — t seems unmoved — a peace inevitable — stocks rise — the peers this moment kissing hands, etc. etc. (this week may be christened the Kiss-hands Week) for a hundred changes will happen in consequence of these. Pray present my compliments to Mrs. C — and all friends, and believe me, with the greatest fidelity,

Your ever obliged

L. STERNE.

P. S. Is it not strange that Lord T — — t should have power to remove the Duke of R — — d?

Pray when you have read this, send the news to Mrs. Sterne.

L E T T E R X.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR,

I RETURN you ten thousand thanks for the favour of your letter—and the account you give me of my wife and girl. I saw Mr. Ch—y to-night at Ranelagh, who tells me you have inoculated my friend Bobby. I heartily wish him well through, and hope in God all goes right.

On Monday we set out with a grand retinue of Lord Rockingham's (in whose suite I move) for Windsor—they have contracted for fourteen hundred pounds for the dinner, to some general undertaker, of which the K. has bargained to pay one-third. Lord G——S——was last Saturday at the opera, some say with great effrontery—others with great dejection.

I have little news to add.—There is a chilling pamphlet wrote against Triftram.—I wish they would write a hundred such.

Mrs. Sterne says her purse is light; will you, dear Sir, be so good as to pay her ten guineas, and I will reckon with you

when I have the pleasure of meeting you?
—My best compliments to Mrs. C. and all
friends.—Believe me, dear Sir, your oblig-
ed and faithful

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R X I.

TO MRS. F—.

DEAR MADAM,

York, Tuesday, Nov. 19.

YOUR kind inquiries after my health
deserve my best thanks. What can give
one more pleasure than the good wishes
of those we value?—I am sorry you give
so bad an account of your own health, but
hope you will find benefit from tar-water
—it has been of infinite service to me.—I
suppose, my good lady, by what you say
in your letter, „that I am busy writing an
extraordinary book,” that your intelli-
gence comes from York—the fountain-head
of chit-chat news—and—no matter.—Now
for your desire of knowing the reason of
my turning author? Why truly I am tired

of employing my brains for other people's advantage.—It is a foolish sacrifice I have made for some years to an ungrateful person.—I depend much upon the candour of the Public, but I shall not pick out a jury to try the merit of my book amongst *****, and—till you read my Tristram, do not, like some people, condemn it.—Laugh I am sure you will at some passages.—I have hired a small house in the Minister-Yard for my wife and daughter—the latter is to begin dancing, etc. If I cannot leave her a fortune, I will at least give her an education.—As I shall publish my works very soon, I shall be in town by March, and shall have the pleasure of meeting with you.—All your friends are well, and ever hold you in the same estimation that your sincere friend does.

Adieu, dear lady! Believe me, with every wish for your happiness, your most faithful, etc.

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R XII.

TO DR. *****.

DEAR SIR,

Jan. 30. 1760.

—*DE mortuis nil nisi bonum*, is a maxim which you have so often of late urged in conversation, and in your letters (but in your last especially) with such seriousness and severity against me, as the supposed transgressor of the rule,—that you have made me at length as serious and severe as yourself:—but that the humours you have stirred up might not work too potently within me, I have waited four days to cool myself, before I would set pen to paper to answer your „*de mortuis nil nisi bonum*.” I declare I have considered the wisdom and foundation of it over and over again, as dispassionately and charitably as a good Christian can; and, after all, I can find nothing in it, or make more of it, than a nonsensical lullaby of some nurse, put into Latin by some pedant, to be chanted by some hypocrite to the end of the world, for the consolation

of departing lechers. It is, I own, Latin; and I think that is all the weight it has—for, in plain English, it is a loose and futile position below a dispute—, *you are not to speak any thing of the dead but what is good.*—Why so?—Who says so?—Neither reason or scripture.—Inspired authors have done otherwise—and reason and common sense tell me, that if the characters of past ages and men are to be drawn at all, they are to be drawn like themselves; that is, with their excellencies, and with their foibles—and it is as much a piece of justice to the world, and to virtue too, to do the one, as the other.—The ruling passion *et les egaremens du coeur* are the very things which mark and distinguish a man's character;—in which I would as soon leave out a man's head as his hobby-horse.—However, if like the poor devil of a painter we must conform to this pious canon, *de mortuis, etc.* which I own has a spice of piety in the *sound* of it, and he obliged to paint both our angels and our devils out of the same pot—I then infer that our Sydenhams and Sangrados, our Lucretias and Messalinas, our

Sommers and our Bolingbrokes, are alike entitled to statues, and all the historians or satirists who have said otherwise since they departed this life, from Sallust to S—e, are guilty of the crimes you charge me with, „, cowardice and injustice.”

But why cowardice?—„, Because it is not courage to attack a dead man who cannot defend himself.”—But why do you doctors of the faculty attack such a one with your incision-knife?—Oh! for the good of the living.— —’Tis my plea.—But I have something more to say in my behalf—and it is this—I am not guilty of the charge—though defensible. I have not cut up Doctor Kunaastrokius at all—I have just scratched him—and that scarce skin-deep.—I do him first all honour—speak of Kunaastrokius as a great man—(be he who he will) and then most distantly hint at a drole foible in his character—and that not first reported (to the few who can even understand the hint) by me—but known before by every chamber-maid and footman within the bills of mortality.—But Kunaastrokius, you say, was a great man.—It is that very circumstance which makes

the pleafantry—for I could name at this instant a fcore of honeft gentlemen who might have done the very thing which Kunaftrokus did, and feen no joke in it at all.—As to the failing of Kunaftrokus, which you fay can only be imputed to his friends as a misfortune—I fee nothing like a misfortune in it to any friend or relation of Kunaftrokus—that Kunaftrokus upon occasions fhould fit with *** and *****—I have put thefe ftars not *to hurt your worship's delicacy*—If Kunaftrokus after all is too facred a character to be even fmiled at, (which is all I have done) he has had better luck than his betters.—In the fame page without imputation of cowardice) I have faid as much of a man of twice his wifdom—and that is Solomon; of whom I have made the fame remark, „That they were both great men—and like all mortal men had each their ruling paffion.”

—The confolation you give me, „That my book however will be read enough to anfwer my defign of raifing a tax upon the public”—is very unconfolatory—to fay nothing how very mortifying!—By h—n!

an author is worse treated than a common ***** at this rate—, *You will get a penny by your sins, and that's enough.*— Upon this chapter let me comment.— That I proposed laying the world under contribution when I set pen to paper—is what I own; and I suppose I may be allowed to have that view in my head in common with every other writer, to make my labour of advantage to myself.— Do not you do the same?—But I beg I may add, that whatever views I had of that kind, I had other views—the first of which was, the hopes of doing the world good by ridiculing what I thought deserving of it—or of disservice to sound learning, etc.—How I have succeeded my book must shew—and this I leave entirely to the world—but not to that little world of *your acquaintance*, whose opinion and sentiments you call the general opinion of the best judges *without exception*, who all affirm (you say) that my book cannot be put into the hands of any woman of *character*. (I hope you except widows, doctor—for they are not *all* so squeamish—but I am told they are all really of my party, in

return for some good offices done their interests in the 176th page of my second volume)—But for the chaste married, and chaste unmarried part of the sex—they must not read my book! Heaven forbid the stock of chastity should be lessened by the Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy—yes, his Opinions—it would certainly debauch'em! God take them under his protection in this fiery trial, and send us plenty of Duennas to watch the workings of their humours, 'till they have safely got through the whole work.—If this will not be sufficient, may we have plenty of Sangrados to pour in plenty of cold water, till this terrible fermentation is over.—As for the *nummum in loculo*, which you mention to me a second time, I fear you think me very poor, or in debt.—I thank God, though I don't abound—that I have enough for a clean shirt every day, and a mutton chop—and my contentment with this has thus far (and I hope ever will) put me above stooping an inch for it.—For estate, curse on it, I like it not to that degree, nor envy (*you may be sure*) any man who kneels in the dirt for it—so that

howsoever I may fall short of the ends proposed in commencing author—I enter this *protest*; first, that my end was *honest*; and secondly, that I wrote not to be *fed*, but to be *famous*.—I am much obliged to Mr. Garrick for his very favourable opinion—but why, dear Sir, had he done better in finding fault with it than in commending it—To humble me?—An author is not so soon humbled as you imagine—No, but to make the book better by castrations.—That is still *sub judice*; and I can assure you upon this chapter, that the very passages and descriptions you propose that I should sacrifice in my second edition, are what are best relished by men of wit, and some others whom I esteem as sound criticks—so that, upon the whole, I am still kept up, if not above fear, at least above despair, and have seen enough to shew me the folly of an attempt of castrating my book to the prudish humours of particulars. I believe the short cut would be, to publish this letter at the beginning of the third volume, as an apology for the first and second.—I was sorry to find a censure upon the insincerity of some of

my friends—I have no reason myself to reproach any one man—my friends have continued in the same opinions of my books which they first gave me of it—many indeed have thought better of 'em, by considering them more; few worse.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R XIII.

TO THE B—— OF G——.

MY LORD,

York, June 9. 1760.

NOT knowing where to send two sets of my Sermons, I could think of no better expedient than to order them into Mr. Berrenger's hands, who has promised me that he will wait upon your Lordship with them, the first moment he hears you are in town. The truest and humblest thanks I return to your Lordship for the generosity of your protection, and advice to me; by making a good use of the one, I will

hope to deserve the other. I wish your Lordship all the health and happiness in this world, for I am

Your Lordship's

Most obliged and

Most grateful Servant,

L. STERNE.

P. S. I am just fitting down to go on with Tristram, etc.—The scribblers use me ill, but they have used my betters much worse, for which may God forgive them.

L E T T E R XIV.

TO THE REV. MR. STERNE.

REVEREND SIR,

Prior-Park, June 15. 1760.

I HAVE your favour of the 9th instant, and am glad to understand you are got safe home, and employed again in your proper studies and amusements. You have it in your power to make that which is an amusement to yourself and others, useful to both: at least you should, above all things beware of its becoming hurtful to

either, by any violations of decency and good manners : but I have already taken such repeated liberties of advising you on that head, that to say more would be needless, or perhaps unacceptable.

Whoever is, in any way, well received by the public, is sure to be annoyed by that pest of the public, *profligate scribblers*. This is the common lot of successful adventurers; but such have often a worse evil to struggle with, I mean the over-officiousness of their indiscreet friends. There are two Odes, as they are called, printed by Doddsley. Whoever was the author, he appears to be a monster of impiety and lewdness:—yet such is the malignity of the scribblers, some have given them to your friend Hall; and others, which is still more impossible, to yourself; tho' the first Ode has the insolence to place you both in a mean and a ridiculous light. But this might arise from a tale equally groundless and malignant, that you had shewn them to your acquaintance in *MS.* before they were given to the public. Nor was their being printed by Doddsley the likeliest means of discrediting the calumny.

About this time another, under the mask of friendship, pretended to draw your character, which was since published in a *Female Magazine*, (for Dulness, who often has as great a hand as the devil in deforming God's works of the creation, has *made them*, it seems, *male* and *female*) and from thence it was transferred into a *Chronicle*. Pray have you read it, or do you know it's author?

But of all these things I dare say Mr. Garrick, whose prudence is equal to his honesty or his talents, has remonstrated to you with the freedom of a friend. He knows the inconstancy of what is called the Public towards all, even the best intencioned, of those who contribute to it's pleasure or amusement. He (as every man of honour and discretion would) has availed himself of the public favour to regulate the taste, and, in his proper station, to reform the manners of the fashionable world; while by a well judged oeconomy he has provided against the temptations of a mean and servile dependency on the follies and vices of the great.

In a word, be assured, there is no one

more sincerely wishes your welfare and happiness than,

Reverend Sir,

W. G.

L E T T E R X V .

TO MY WITTY WIDOW, MRS. F— —.

MADAM,

Coxwold, Aug. 3. 1760.

WHEN a man's brains are as dry as a squeezed orange — and he feels he has no more conceit in him than a Mallet, it is in vain to think of sitting down and writing a letter to a lady of your wit, unless in the honest John-Trot-stile of, *yours of the 15th. instant came safe to hand, etc.* which, by the bye, looks like a letter of business; and you know very well, from the first letter I had the honour to write to you, I am a man of no business at all. This vile plight I found my genius in, was the reason I have told Mr. — — I would not write to you till the next post —hoping by that time to get some small

recruit at least of vivacity, if not wit, to set out with; — but upon second thoughts, thinking a bad letter in season to be better than a good one out of it, this scrawl is the consequence; which if you will burn the moment you get it, I promise to send you a fine set essay in the stile of your female epistolizers, cut and trimmed at all points.—God defend me from such, who never yet knew what it was to say or write one premeditated word in my whole life—for this reason I send you with pleasure, because wrote with the careless irregularity of an easy heard.—Who told you Garrick wrote the medley for Beard?—It was wrote in his house, however, and before I left town.—I deny it—I was not lost two days before I left town—I was lost all the time I was there, and never found till I got to this Shandy-castle of mine.—Next winter I intend to sojourn amongst you with more decorum, and will neither be lost or found any where.

Now I wish to God I was at your elbow — — I have just finished one volume of Shandy, and I want to read it to some one who I know can taste and relish

humour.—This, by the way, is a little impudent in me—for I take the thing for granted, which their High Mightinesses the World have yet to determine—but I mean no such thing—I could wish only to have your opinion.—Shall I, in truth, give you mine?—I dare not—but I will, provided you keep it to yourself—Know then, that I think there is more laughable humour, — with equal degree of Cervantick satire — if not more than in the last — but we are bad judges of the merit of our children.

I return you a thousand thanks for your friendly congratulations upon my habitation—and I will take care you shall never wish me but well; for I am, madam,

With great esteem and truth,

Your most obliged

L. STERNE.

P. S. I have wrote this so vilely and so precipitately, I fear you must carry it to a decypherer — — I beg you'll do me the honour to write — otherwise you draw me in, instead of Mr. — — drawing *you* into a scrape—for I should sorrow to have

Sterne's Letters.

E

a *taste* of so agreeable a correspondent—
and *no more*.

Adieu.

L E T T E R XVI.

TO LADY—.

Coxwold, Sept. 21, 1761.

I RETURN to my new habitation, fully determined to write as hard as can be, and thank you most cordially, my dear lady, for your letter of congratulation upon my Lord Fauconberg's having presented me with the curacy of this place—though your congratulation comes somewhat of the latest, as I have been possessed of it some time.—I hope I have been of some service to his Lordship, and he has sufficiently requited me.—It is seventy guineas a year in my pocket, though worth a hundred—but it obliges me to have a curate to officiate at Sutton and Stillington.—It is within a mile of his Lordship's seat and park—It is a very agreeable ride-out in the chaise I purchased for my wife.—Lyd

has a poney, which she delights in.—
Whilst they take these diversions, I am scribbling away at my Triftram. These two volumes are, I think, the best.—I shall write as long as I live; it is, in fact, my hobby-horse: and so much am I delighted with my uncle Toby's imaginary character, that I am become an enthusiast.—My Lydia helps to copy for me—and my wife knits and listens as I read her chapters.—The coronation of his Majesty (whom God preserve!) has cost me the value of an ox, which is to be roasted whole in the middle of the town, and my parishioners will, I suppose, be very merry upon the occasion.—You will then be in town—and feast your eyes with a sight, which it is to be hoped will not be in either of our powers to see again—for in point of age we have about twenty years the start of his Majesty.—And now, my dear friend, I must finish this—and with every wish for your happiness conclude myself your most sincere well-wisher and friend,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R XVII.

TO J — — H — — S — —, ESQ.

DEAR H — —

Coxwold, —, 1761.

I REJOICE you are in London—rest you there in peace ; here it is the devil. You was a good prophet—I wish myself back again, as you told me I should—but not because a thin death-doing pestiferous north-east wind blows in a line directly from Crazy-castle turret full upon me in this cuckoldly retreat, (for I value the north-east wind and all it's powers not a straw)—but the transition from rapid motion to absolute rest was too violent. — I should have walked about the streets of York ten days, as a proper medium to have passed through, before I entered upon my rest—I staid but a moment, and I have been here but a few, to satisfy me. I have not managed my miseries like a wise man—and if God, for my consolation under them, had not poured forth the spirit of Shandeyism into me, which will

not suffer me to think two moments upon any grave subject, I would else just now lay down and die — die — and yet in half an hour's time. I'll lay a guinea, I shall be as merry as a monkey — and as mischievous too, and forget it all — so that this is but a copy of the present train running across my brain. — And so you think this cursed stupid — but that, my dear H. depends much upon the *quotâ horâ* of your shabby clock. — If the pointer of it is in any quarter between ten in the morning or four in the afternoon, I give it up — or if the day is obscured by dark engendering clouds of either wet or dry weather, I am still lost — But who knows but it may be five — and the day as fine a day as ever shone upon the earth since the destruction of Sodom — and peradventure your honour may have got a good hearty dinner to-day, and eat and drank your intellectuals into a placidulish and a blandulish amalgama — to bear nonsense — So much for that.

It is as cold and churlish just now, as (if God had not pleased it to be so) it ought to have been in bleak December,

and therefore I am glad you are where you are, and where (I repeat it again) I wish I was also—Curse of poverty, and absence from those we love!—they are two great evils which embitter all things—and yet with the first I am not haunted much. —As to matrimony, I should be a beast to rail at it, for my wife is easy—but the world is not—and had I staid from her a second longer it would have been a burning shame—else she declares herself happier without me—But not in anger is this declaration made—but in pure sober good sense, built on sound experience—she hopes you will be able to strike a bargain for me before this time twelvemonth to lead a bear round Europe; and from this hopes from you, I verily believe it is, that you are so high in her favour at present—She swears you are a fellow of wit, tho' humorous; a funny jolly soul, though somewhat splenetic; and (bating the love of women) as honest as *gold*—How do you like the simile?—Oh, Lord! now are you going to Ranelagh to-night, and I am sitting, sorrowful as the prophet was when the voice cried out to him and said,

„What dost thou here, Elijah?" — It is well the spirit does not make the same at Coxwold—for unless for the few sheep left me to take care of in this wilderness, I might as well, nay better, be at Mecca—When we find we can by a shifting of places run away from ourselves, what think you of a jaunt there, before we finally pay a visit to the *Vale of Jehosophat*? —As ill a fame as we have, I trust I shall one day or other see you face to face—so tell the two Colonels, if they love good company, to live righteously and soberly as *you* do, and then they will have no doubts or dangers within or without them—Present my best and warmest wishes to them, and advise the eldest to prop up his spirits, and get a rich dowager before the conclusion of the peace—Why will not the advice suit both, *par nobile fratrum*?

To-morrow morning (if Heaven permit) I begin the fifth volume of Shandy—I care not a curse for the critics—I'll load my vehicle with what goods *he* sends me, and they may take 'em off my hands, or let them alone—I am very valourous—and

'tis in proportion as we retire from the world, and see it in it's true dimensions, that we despise it — No bad rant! — God above blefs you! You know I am

Your affectionate cousin,
L. STERNE.

What few remain of the Demoniacs, greet—and write me a letter, if you are able, as foolish as this.

LETTER XVIII.

TO D — — G — —, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Paris, Jan. 31, 1762.

THINK not that because I have been a fortnight in this metropolis without writing to you, that therefore I have not had you and Mrs. G. a hundred times in my head and heart—Heart! Yes, yes, say you —But I must not waste paper in *badinage* this post, whatever I do the next. Well! here I am, my friend, as much improved in my health for the time, as ever your friendship could wish, or at least your

faith give credit to—By the bye, I am somewhat worse in my intellectuals, for my head is turned round with what I see, and the unexpected honours I have met with here. Triftram was almost as much known here as in London, at least among your men of condition and learning, and has got me introduced into so many circles ('tis *comme à Londres*.) I have just now a fortnight's dinners and suppers upon my hands—My application to the Count de Choiseul goes on swimmingly, for not only Mr. Pelletiere (who, by the bye, sends ten thousand civilities to you and Mrs. G.) has undertaken my affair, but the Count de Limbourg— — the Baron d'Holbach has offered any security for the inoffensiveness of my behaviour in France—'tis more, you rogue! than you will do—This Baron is one of the most learned noblemen here, the great protector of wits, and the *scavans* who are no wits—keeps open house three days a week— — his house is now, as yours was to me, my own—he lives at a great expence—'Twas an odd incident when I was introduced to the Count de Biffie, which

I was at his desire—I found him reading Triftram—This grandee does me great honours, and gives me leave to go a private way through his apartments into the Palais Royal, to view the Duke of Orleans' collections, every day I have time—I have been at the Doctors of Sorbonne—I hope in a fortnight to break through, or rather from the delights of this place, which in the *sçavoir vivre* exceeds all the places, I believe, in this section of the globe.—

I am going, when this letter is wrote, with Mr. Fox, and Mr. Macartney to Versailles—the next morning I wait upon Monf. Titon, in company with Mr. Macartney, who is known to him, to deliver your commands. I have bought you the pamphlet upon theatrical, or rather tragical declamation—I have bought another in verse, worth reading, and you will receive them, with what I can pick up this week, by a servant of Mr. Hodges, whom he is sending back to England.

I was last night with Mr. Fox to see Madle. Clairon in *Iphigenie*—she is extremely great—Would to God you had one

or two like her—What a luxury, to see you with one of such powers in the same interesting scene—but it is too much—Ah! Preville! thou art Mercury himself—By virtue of taking a couple of boxes, we have bespoke this week „The Frenchman in London,” in which Preville is to send us home to supper *all happy*—I mean about fifteen or sixteen English of distinction, who are now here, and live well with each other.

I am under great obligations to Mr. Pitt, who has behaved in every respect to me like a man of good breeding and good nature—In a post or two I will write again—Foley is an honest soul—I could write six volumes of what has passed comically in this great scene since these last fourteen days—*—*but more of this hereafter—*—*We are all going into mourning; nor you, nor Mrs. G. would know me, if you met me in my remise.—Bless you both!—Service to Mrs. Denis.—Adieu, adieu.

L. S.

L E T T E R XIX.

TO LADY D—.

London, Feb. 1, 1762.

YOUR Ladyship's kind inquiry after my health is indeed kind, and of a piece with the rest of your character. Indeed I am very ill, having broke a vessel in my lungs—Hard writing in the summer, together with preaching, which I have not strength for, is ever fatal to me—but I cannot avoid the latter yet, and the former is too pleasurable to be given up—I believe I shall try if the south of France will not be of service to me—His G. of Y. has most humanely given me the permission for a year or two—I shall set off with great hopes of it's efficacy, and shall write to my wife and daughter to come and join me at Paris, else my stay could not be so long—, „Le Fevre's story has beguiled your ladyship of your tears,” and the thought of the accusing spirit flying up to heaven's chancery with the oath, you are kind enough to say is sublime—My friend Mr.

Garrick thinks so too, and I am most vain of his approbation—your ladyship's opinion adds not a little to my vanity.

I wish I had time to take a little excursion to Bath, were it only to thank you for all the obliging things you say in your letter—but it is impossible—accept at least my warmest thanks—If I could tempt my friend Mr. H. to come to France, I should be truly happy—If I can be of any service to you at Paris, command him who is, and ever will be,

Your Ladyship's faithful,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XX.

TO J— — H— — S— —, ESQ.

DEAR H— —,

Coxwold, July 28, 1761.

I SYMPATHIZED for, or with you, on the detail you give me of your late agitations—and would willingly have taken my horse, and trotted to the oracle to have inquired into the etymology of all your

sufferings, had I not been assured, that all that evacuation of bilious matter, with all that abdominal motion attending it (both which are equal to a month's purgation and exercise) will have left you better than it found you—Need one go to D—to be told that all kind of mild, (mark, I am going to talk more foolishly than your apothecary) opening, saponaceous, dirty-shirt, sud-washing liquors are proper for you, and consequently all styptical potations, death and destruction?—If you had not shut up your gall-ducts by these, the Glauber salts could not have hurt:—as it was, it was like a match to the gunpowder, by raising a fresh combustion, as all physic does at first, so that you have been let off—nitre, brimstone, and charcoal, (which is blackness itself) all at one blast.—It was well the piece did not burst, for I think it underwent great violence, and, as it is proof, will, I hope, do much service in this militating world.—Panty is mistaken, I quarrel with no one.—There was that coxcomb of——in the house, who lost temper with me for no reason upon earth but that I could not fall down

and worship a brazen image of learning and eloquence, which he set up to the persecution of all true believers.—I sat down upon *his altar*, and whistled in the time of his divine service—and broke down his carved work, and kicked his incense-pot to the D—; so he retreated, *sed non sine telo in corde suo*.—I have wrote a *clerum*, whether I shall take my doctor's degrees or no—I am much in doubt, but I trow not.—I go on with Tristram—I have bought seven hundred books at a purchase dog-cheap—and many good—and I have been a week getting them set up in my best room here—Why do not you transport yours to town? But I talk like a fool.——This will just catch you at your Spa—I wish you *incolumem apud Londinum*——Do you go there for good and all—or ill?——I am, dear cousin,

Yours affectionately,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R XXI.

TO D. G—, ESQ.

DEAR G.

Paris, March 19, 1762.

THIS will be put into your hands by Doctor Shippen, a physician, who has been here some time with Miss Poyntz, and is this moment setting off for your metropolis, so I snatch the opportunity of writing to you and my kind friend Mrs. G.—I see nothing like her here, and yet I have been introduced to one half of their best Goddesses, and in a month more shall be admitted to the shrines of the other half—But I neither worship—or fall (much) upon my knees before them; but, on the contrary, have converted many unto Shandeyism:—for be it known, I Shandy it away fifty times more than I was ever wont, talk more nonsense than ever you heard me talk in your days—and to all sorts of people.—*Qui le diable est cet homme là?*—said Choiseul, t'other day—*„Ce Chevalier Shandy.”*—You'll think me

as vain as a devil, was I to tell you the rest of the dialogue:—whether the bearer knows it or no, I know not—'twill serve up after supper, in Southampton-street, amongst other small dishes, after the fatigues of Richard the III^d.—O God! they have nothing here which gives the nerves so smart a blow as those great characters in the hands of G—! But I forgot I am writing to the man himself—The devil take (as he will) these transports of enthusiasm! Apropos—the whole City of Paris is *bewitch'd* with the comic opera, and if it was not for the affairs of the Jesuits, which take up one half of our talk, the comic opera would have it all—It is a tragical nuisance in all companies as it is, and was it not for some sudden starts and dashes—of Shandeyism, which now and then either breaks the thread, or entangles it so that the devil himself would be puzzled in winding it off—I should die a martyr—This by the way I never will.

I send you over some of these comic operas by the bearer, with *Le Sallon*, a satire—The French comedy I seldom visit—they act scarce any thing but tragedies

—and tho' Clairon is great, and Madle. Dumefnil in some places still greater than her—yet I cannot bear preaching—I fancy I got a surfeit of it in my younger days. —There is a tragedy to be damn'd to-night —Peace be with it, and the gentle brain which made it!—I have ten thousand things to tell you I cannot write—I do a thousand things which cut no figure *but in the doing*—and, as in London, I have the honour of having done and said a thousand things I never did or dream'd of —and yet I dream abundantly—If the devil stood behind me in the shape of a courier, I could not write faster than I do, having five letters more to dispatch by the same gentleman; he is going into another section of the globe, and when he has seen you, he will depart in peace.

The Duke of Orleans has suffered my portrait to be added to the number of some odd men in his collection; and a gentleman who lives with him has taken it most expressively, at full length—I purpose to obtain an etching of it, and to send it you—Your prayer for me of *rosy health* is heard—If I stay here for three

or four months, I shall return more than reinstated. My love to Mrs. G.

I am, my dear G.

Your most humble Servant,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XXII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR G.

Paris, April 10, 1762.

I SNATCH the occasion of Mr. Wilcox (the late Bishop of Rochester's son) leaving this place for England to write to you, and I inclose it to Hall, who will put it into your hand, possibly behind the scenes. I hear no news of you, or your *empire*—I would have said *kingdom*—but here every thing is hyperbolized—and if a woman is but simply pleased,—it is *Je suis charmée*—and if she is charmed, it is nothing less than that she is *ravished*—and when ravished, (which may happen) there is nothing left for her but to fly to the other world for a metaphor, and swear, *qu'elle*

étoit toute extasiée—which mode of speaking is, by the bye, here creeping into use; and there is scarce a woman who understands the *bon ton*, but is seven times in a day in downright extasy—that is, the devil's in her—by a small mistake of one word for the other—Now, where am I got?

I have been these two days reading a tragedy, given me by a lady of talents, to read and conjecture if it would do for you—It is from the plan of Diderot, and possibly half a translation of it—, "The Natural Son, or, the Triumph of Virtue," in five acts—It has too much sentiment in it, (at least for me) the speeches too long, and savour too much of *preaching*—this may be a second reason it is not to my taste—It is all love, love, love, throughout, without much separation in the character; so I fear it would not do for your stage, and perhaps for the very reason which recommends it to a French one. After a vile suspension of three weeks—we are beginning with our comedies and operas again—Yours I hear never flourished more—here the comic actors were ne-

ver so low—the tragedians hold up their heads—in all senses. I have known *one little man* support the theatrical world, like a David Atlas, upon his shoulders; but Preville can't do half as much here, though Madle. Clairon stands by him, and sets her back to his—she is very great, however, and highly improved since you saw her—she also supports her dignity at table, and has her public day every Thursday, when she *gives to eat*, (as they say here) to all that are hungry and dry.

You are much talked of here, and much expected, as soon as the peace will let you—these two last days you have happened to engross the whole conversation at two great houses where I was at dinner—It is the greatest problem in nature, and in this meridian, that one and the same man should possess such tragic and comic powers, and in such an equilibrio, as to divide the world for which of the two Nature intended him.

Crebillon has made a convention with me, which, if he is not too lazy, will be no bad *perfidage*—As soon as I get to Toulouse, he has agreed to write me an

expostulatory letter upon the indecorums of T. Shandy—which is to be answered by recrimination upon the liberties in his own works—These are to be printed together—Crebillon against Sterne—Sterne against Crebillon—the copy to be sold, and the money equally divided—This is good Swiss-policy.

I am recovered greatly, and if I could spend one whole winter at Toulouse, I should be fortified, in my inner man, beyond all danger of relapsing.—A sad asthma my daughter has been martyr'd with these three winters, but mostly this last, makes it, I fear, necessary she should try the last remedy of a warmer and softer air; so I am going this week to Versailles, to wait upon Count Choiseul to solicit passports for them—If this system takes place, they join me here—and after a month's stay we all decamp for the south of France—if not, I shall see you in June next. Mr. Fox and Mr. Macartney having left Paris, I live altogether in French families—I laugh 'till I cry, and in the same tender moments *cry 'till I laugh*. I Shandy it more than ever, and verily do believe,

that by mere Shandeyism, sublimated by a laughter-loving people, I fence as much against infirmities, as I do by the benefit of air and climate. Adieu, dear G. Present ten thousand of my best respects and wishes to and for my friend Mrs. G.—Had she been last night upon the Tuilleries, she would have annihilated a thousand French goddesses *in one single turn*.

I am most truly,
my dear friend,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XXIII.

TO MRS. S—, YORK.

MY DEAR,

Paris, — — 16th, 1762.

IT is a thousand to one that this reaches you before you have set out—however, I take the chance—You will receive one wrote last night, the moment you get to Mr. E. and to wish you joy of your arrival in town.—To that letter which you will find in town, I have nothing to add

that I can think on—for I have almost drained my brains dry upon the subject.—For God's sake, rise early and gallop away in the cool—and always see that you have not forgot your baggage in changing post-chaises—You will find good tea upon the road from York to Dover—only bring a little to carry you from Calais to Paris—Give the Custom-House officers what I told you—at Calais give more, if you have much Scotch snuff—but as tobacco is good here, you had best bring a Scotch mill and make it yourself, that is, order your valet to manufacture it—it will keep him out of mischief.—I would advise you to take three days in coming up, for fear of heating yourself—See that they do not give you a bad vehicle, when a better is in the yard, but you will look sharp—drink small rhenish to keep you cool (that is, if you like it)—live well, and deny yourselves nothing your hearts wish. So God in heaven prosper and go along with you—Kiss my Lydia, and believe me both affectionately,

Yours,

L. STERNE

L E T T E R XXIV.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR,

Paris, May 31, 1762.

THERE have no mails arrived here 'till this morning for three posts, so I expected with great impatience a letter from you and Lydia—and lo! it is arrived. You are as busy as Throp's wife, and by the time you receive this, you will be busier still—I have exhausted all my ideas about your journey—and what is needful for you to do before and during it—so I write only to tell you I am well—Mr. Colebrooks, the minister of Swisserland's secretary, I got this morning to write a letter for you to the governor of the Custom-House-Office at Calais—it shall be sent you next post.—You must be cautious about Scotch snuff—Take half a pound in your pocket, and make Lyd do the same. It is well I bought you a chaise—there is no getting one in Paris now, but at an enormous price—for they are all sent to the army,

Sterne's Letters.

G

and such a one as yours we have not been able to match for forty guineas for a friend of mine, who is going from hence to Italy — The weather was never known to set in so hot as it has done the latter end of this month, so he and his party are to get into his chaise by four in the morning, and travel 'till nine — and not stir out again till six: but I hope this severe heat will abate by the time you come here—however, I beg of you once more to take special care of heating your blood in travelling, and come *tout doucement*, when you find the heat too much — I shall look impatiently for intelligence from you, and hope to hear all goes well; that you conquer all difficulties, that you have received your pass-port, my picture, etc. Write and tell me something of every thing. I long to see you both, you may be assured, my dear wife and child, after so long a separation—and write me a line directly, that I may have all the notice you can give me, that I may have apartments ready and fit for you when you arrive.—For my own part, I shall continue writing to you a fortnight longer—Present

my respects to all friends—You have bid Mr. C. get my visitations at P. done for me, etc. etc. If any offers are made about the inclosure at Rascal, they must be enclosed to me—nothing that is fairly proposed shall stand still on my score. Do all for the best, as He who guides all things will I hope do for us—so Heaven preserve you both—Believe me

Your affectionate

L. STERNE.

Love to my Lydia—I have bought her a gold watch to present to her when she comes.

L E T T E R XXV.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR,

Paris, June 7, 1762.

I KEEP my promise, and write to you again—I am sorry the bureau must be opened for the deeds—but you will see it done—I imagine you are convinced of the necessity of bringing three hundred pounds in your pocket—If you consider,

Lydia must have two flight negligees—you will want a new gown or two: as for painted linens, buy them in town, they will be more admired because English than French.—Mrs. H. writes me word, that I am mistaken about buying silk cheaper at Toulouse than Paris; that she advises you to buy what you want here—where they are very beautiful and cheap, as well as blouses, gauzes, etc.—These, I say, will all cost you sixty guineas—and you must have them—for in this country nothing must be spared for the back—and if you dine on an onion, and lie in a garret seven stories high, you must not betray it in your cloaths, according to which you are well or ill looked on. When we are got to Toulouse, we must begin to turn the penny, and we may (if you do not game much) live very cheap—I think that expression will divert you.—And now God knows I have not a wish but for your health, comfort, and safe arrival here—Write to me every other post, that I may know how you go on—You will be in raptures with your chariot—Mr. R. a gentleman of fortune, who is

going to Italy, and has seen it, has offered me thirty guineas for my bargain.— You will wonder all the way, how I am to find room in it for a third—To ease you of this wonder, it is by what the coach-makers here call a cave, which is a second bottom added to that you set your feet upon, which lets the person (who sits over-against you) down with his knees to your ancles, and by which you have all more room—and what is more, less heat—because his head does not intercept the foreglass little or nothing—Lyd and I will enjoy this by turns.—Sometimes I shall take a *bidet*—(a little posthorse) and scamper before—at other times, I shall sit in fresco upon the arm-chair without doors, and one way or other will do very well.—I am under infinite obligations to Mr. Thornhill, for accommodating me thus, and so genteely, for it is like making a present of it.—Mr. T——will send you an order to receive it at Calais—And now, my dear girls, have I forgot any thing?

Adieu, adieu!

Yours most affectionately,

L. STERNE.

A week or ten days will enable you to see every thing—and so long you must stay to rest your bones.

LETTER XXVI.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAREST,

Paris, June 14, 1762.

HAVING an opportunity of writing by a friend who is setting out this morning for London, I write again, in case the two last letters I have wrote this week to you should be detained by contrary winds at Calais—I have wrote to Mr. E— —by the same hand, to thank him for his kindness to you, in the handsomest manner I could—and have told him, his good heart and his wife's have made them overlook the trouble of having you at his house, but that if he takes you apartments near him, they will still have occasion enough left to shew their friendship to us—I have begged him to assist you, and stand by you, as if he was in my place, with re-

gard to the sale of the Shandy—And then the copy-right—mark to keep these things distinct in your head—But Becket I have ever found to be a man of probity, and I dare say you will have very little trouble in finishing matters with him — and I would rather wish you to treat with him than with another man—but whoever buys the fifth and sixth volumes of Shandy, must have the nay-say of the seventh and eighth.—I wish, when you come here, in case the weather is too hot to travel, you could think it pleasant to go to the Spa for four or six weeks, where we should live for half the money we should spend at Paris—after that we should take the sweetest season of the vintage to go to the south of France—But we will put our heads together, and you shall just do as you please in this, and in every thing which depends on me—for I am a being perfectly contented, when others are pleased—To bear and forbear will ever be my maxim—only I fear the heats through a journey of five hundred miles for you and my Lydia, more than for myself.— — Do not forget the watch-chains—bring a

couple for a gentleman's watch likewise.—
We shall lie under great obligations to
the Abbé M. and must make him such a
small acknowledgment: according to my
way of flourishing, it will be a present
worth a kingdom to him—They have bad
pins and vile needles here—bring for your-
self, and some for presents—as also a
strong bottlekrew for whatever Scrub we
may hire as butler, coachman, etc. to
uncork us our Frontiniac—You will find
a letter for you at the *Lion d'Argent*—
Send for your chaise into the court-yard,
and see all is right—Buy a chain at Calais
strong enough not to be cut off, and let
your portmanteau be tied on the forepart
of your chaise, for fear of a dog's trick—
So God blefs you both, and remember
me to my Lydia.

I am yours affectionately,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R XXVII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAREST,

Paris, June 17, 1762.

PROBABLY you will receive another letter with this, by the same post: if so, read this the last—It will be the last you can possibly receive at York, for I hope it will catch you just as you are upon the wing—If that should happen, I suppose in course you have executed the contents of it, in all things which relate to pecuniary matters; and when these are settled to your mind, you will have got thro' your last difficulty—every thing else will be a step of pleasure, and by the time you have got half a dozen stages you will set up your pipes and sing *Te Deum* together, as you whisk it along.—Desire Mr. C.— to send me a proper letter of attorney by you; he will receive it back by return of post. You have done every thing well with regard to our Sutton and Stillington affairs, and left things in the best channel—If I

was not sure you must have long since got my picture, garnets, etc. I would write and scold Mr. T——abominably—he put them into Becket's hands, to be forwarded by the stage-coach to you as soon as he got to town.—I long to hear from you, and that all my letters and things are come safe to you, and then you will say that I have not been a bad lad—for you will find I have been writing continually, as I wished you to do—Bring your silver coffee-pot: it will serve both to give water, lemonade, and orgeat—to say nothing of coffee and chocolate, which, by the bye, is both cheap and good at Toulouse, like other things.—I had like to have forgot a most necessary thing: there are no copper tea-kettles to be had in France, and we shall find such a thing the most comfortable utensil in the house——Buy a good strong one, which will hold two quarts—a dish of tea will be of comfort to us in our journey south—I have a bronze tea-pot, which we will carry also: as China cannot be brought over from England, we must make up a villainous party-coloured tea equipage to regale ourselves and our

English friends whilst we are at Toulouse —I hope you have got your bill from Becket.—There is a good-natured kind of a trader I have just heard of at Mr. Foley's, who they think will be coming off from England to France, with horses, the latter end of June. He happened to come over with a lady who is sister to Mr. Foley's partner, and I have got her to write a letter to him in London, this post, to beg he will seek you out at Mr. E— —'s; and in case a cartel ship does not go off before he goes, to take you under his care. He was infinitely friendly in the same office last year to the lady who now writes to him, and nursed her on ship-board, and defended her by land with great good will. —Do not say I forget you, or whatever can be conducive to your ease of mind in this journey —I wish I was with you to do these offices myself, and to strew roses on your way—but I shall have time and occasion to shew you I am not wanting—Now, my dears, once more pluck up your spirits—trust in God—in me—and in yourselves—with this, was you put to it, you would encounter all these difficulties ten

times told—Write instantly, and tell me you triumph over all fears; tell me Lydia is better, and a help-mate to you—You say she grows like me—let her shew me she does so in her contempt of small dangers, and fighting against the apprehensions of them, which is better still. As I will not have F.'s share of the books, you will inform him so—Give my love to Mr. Fothergill, and to those true friends which envy has spared me—and for the rest, *laissez passer*—You will find I speak French tolerably—but I only wish to be understood.—You will soon speak better; a month's play with a French Demoiselle will make Lyd chatter it like a magpye. Mrs.—understood not a word of it when she got here, and writes me word she begins to prate apace—you will do the same in a fortnight—Dear Bess, I have a thousand wishes, but have a hope for every one of them—You shall chant the same *jubilate*, my dears, so God bless you! My duty to Lydia, which implies my love too. Adieu, believe me

Your affectionate,

L. STERNE.

Memorandum: Bring watch-chains, tea-kettle, knives, cookery book, etc.

You will smile at this last article — so adieu — At Dover, the Cross Keys; at Calais, at the *Lion d'Argent* — the master a Turk in grain.

L E T T E R XXVIII.

TO LADY D.

Paris, July 9, 1762.

I WILL not send your ladyship the trifles you bid me purchase without a line. I am very well pleased with Paris — Indeed I meet with so many civilities amongst the people here, that I must sing their praises — The French have a great deal of urbanity in their composition, and to stay a little time amongst them will be agreeable. — I splutter French so as to be understood — But I have had a droll adventure here, in which my Latin was of some service to me — I had hired a chaise and a horse to go about seven miles into the country, but, *Shandeyan-like*, did not take notice that the horse was almost dead when I took him — — Before I got half way

the poor animal dropped down dead—so I was forced to appear before the Police, and began to tell my story in French; which was, that the poor beast had to do with a worse beast than himself, namely, *his master*, who had driven him all the day before (Jehu-like), and that he had neither had corn or hay, therefore I was not to pay for the horse—But I might as well have wiffled as have spoke French, and I believe my Latin was equal to my uncle Toby's *Lilabulero*—being not understood because of it's purity. But by dint of words I forced my Judge to do me justice—no common thing by the way in France.—My wife and daughter are arrived—the latter does nothing but look out of the window, and complain of the torment of being frizzled.—I wish she may ever remain a child of Nature—I hate children of Art.

I hope this will find your ladyship well——and that you will be kind enough to direct to me at Toulouse, which place I shall set out for very soon. I am, with truth and sincerity,

Your Ladyship's

Most faithful,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R XXIX.

TO MR. E.

DEAR SIR,

Paris, July 12, 1762.

MY wife and daughter arrived here safe and sound on Thursday, and are in high raptures with the speed and pleasantness of their journey, and particularly at all they see and meet with here. But in their journey from York to Paris, nothing has given them a more sensible and lasting pleasure, than the marks of kindness they received from you and Mrs. E.—The friendship, good will, and politeness of my two friends I never doubted to me or mine, and I return you both all a grateful man is capable of, which is merely my thanks. I have taken however the liberty of sending an India taffety, which Mrs. E. must do me the honour to wear for my wife's sake, who would have got it made up, but that Mr. Stanhope, the Consul of Algiers, who sets off to-morrow morning for London, has been so kind (I

mean his lady) as to take charge of it; and we had but just time to procure it: and had we missed that opportunity, as we should have been obliged to have left it behind us at Paris, we knew not when or how to get it to our friend.—I wish it had been better worth a paragraph. If there is any thing we can buy or procure for you here, (intelligence included) you have a right to command me—for I am yours, with my wife and girl's kind love to you and Mrs. E.

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R XXX.

TO T. H. S. ESQ.

MY DEAR H.

Toulouse, Aug. 12, 1762.

BY the time you have got to the end of this long letter, you will perceive that I have not been able to answer your last 'till now—I have had the intention of doing it almost as often as my prayers in my head—it is thus we use our best friends—What an infamous story is that you have

told me!—After some little remarks on it, the rest of my letter will go on like filk.—
**** is a good-natured old easy fool, and has been deceived by the most artful of her sex, and she must have abundance of impudence and charlatanery to have carried on such a farce. I pity the old man for being taken in for so much money—a man of sense I should have laughed at—My wife saw her when in town, and she had not the appearance of poverty; but when she wants to melt ***'s heart, she puts her gold watch and diamond rings in her drawer.—But he might have been aware of her. I could not have been mistaken in her character—and it is odd she should talk of her wealth to one, and tell another the reverse—so good night to her.—About a week or ten days before my wife arrived at Paris, I had the same accident I had at Cambridge, of breaking a vessel in my lungs. It happened in the night, and I bled the bed full; and finding in the morning I was likely to bleed to death, I sent immediately for a surgeon to bleed me at both arms—This saved me, and with lying speechless three days,

I recovered upon my back in bed: the breach healed, and in a week after I got out—This with my weakness and hurrying about made me think it high time to haste to Toulouse.—We have had four months of such heats that the oldest Frenchman never remembers the like—it was as hot as *Nebuchadnezzar's oven*, and never has relaxed one hour—In the height of this it was our destiny (or rather destruction) to set out by way of Lyons, Montpellier, etc. to shorten, I trow, our sufferings—Good God!—But it is over—and here I am in my own house, quite settled by M—'s aid and good-natured offices, for which I owe him more than I can express or know how to pay at present—It is in the prettiest situation in Toulouse, with near two acres of garden—the house too good by half for us—well furnished, for which I pay thirty pounds a year.—I have got a good cook—my wife a decent *femme de chambre*, and a good looking *laquais*——The Abbé has planned our expences, and set us in such a train, we cannot easily go wrong—though by the bye the D— is seldom found sleeping under a hedge. Mr.

Trotter dined with me the day before I left Paris—I took care to see all executed according to your directions—but Trotter, I dare say, by this has wrote to you—I made him happy beyond expression with your „Crazy Tales,” and more so with it's frontispiece.—I am in spirits, writing a crazy chapter—with my face turned towards thy turret.—'Tis now I wish all warmer climates, countries, and every thing else at——that separates me from our paternal seat—*ce sera là où reposera ma cendre—et ce sera là où mon cousin viendra répondre les pleurs dues à notre amitié.*—I am taking asses milk three times a day, and cows milk as often—I long to see thy face again once more—Greet the Colonel kindly in my name, and thank him cordially from me for his many civilities to Madame and Mademoiselle Shandy at York, who send all due acknowledgments. The humour is over for France and Frenchmen, but that is not enough for your affectionate cousin,

L. S.

(A year will tire us all out, I trow) but thank heaven, the post brings me a letter

from my Anthony—I felicitate you upon what Messrs. the Reviewers allow you—they have too much judgment themselves not to allow you what you are actually possessed of, „talents, wit, and humour.”—Well, write on, my dear cousin, and be guided by thy own fancy.—Oh! how I envy you all at Crazy-Castle!—I could like to spend a month with you—and should return back again for the vintage. I honour the man that has given the world an idea of our parental feat—It is well done—I look at it ten times a day with a *quando ego te aspiciam?*—Now farewell—Remember me to my beloved Colonel—Greet Panty most lovingly on my behalf, and if Mrs. C— and Miss C— etc. are at G—, greet them likewise with a holy kiss—So God blefs you.

L E T T E R XXXI.

TO MR. F—, AT PARIS.

MY DEAR F.

Toulouse, Aug. 14, 1762.

AFTER many turning (*alias* digressions), to say nothing of downright overthrows,

stops, and delays, we have arrived in three weeks at Toulouse, and are now settled in our houses with servants, etc. about us, and look as composed as if we had been here seven years.—In our journey we suffered so much from the heats, it gives me pain to remember it—I never saw a cloud from Paris to Nismes half as broad as a twenty-four sols piece.— —Good God! we were toasted, roasted, grilled, stewed and carbonaded on one side or other all the way—and being all done enough (*assez cuits*) in the day, we were eat up at night by bugs, and other unswept-out vermin, the legal inhabitants (if length of possession gives right) of every inn we lay at.— —Can you conceive a worse accident than that in such a journey, in the hottest day and hour of it, four miles from either tree or shrub which could cast a shade of the size of one of Eve's fig-leaves—that we should break a hind-wheel into ten thousand pieces, and be obliged in consequence to sit five hours on a gravelly road, without one drop of water, or possibility of getting any—To mend the matter, my two postillions were two dough-hearted fools,

and fell a-crying—Nothing was to be done! By heaven, quoth I, pulling off my coat and waistcoat, something shall be done, for I'll thrash you both within an inch of your lives—and then make you take each of you a horse, and ride like two devils to the next post for a cart to carry my baggage, and a wheel to carry ourselves—Our luggage weighed ten quintals—'Twas the fair of Beaucaire—all the world was going or returning—We were asked by every soul who passed by us, if we were going to the fair of Beaucaire—No wonder, quoth I, we have goods enough! *Vous avez raison, mes amis*—

Well! here we are after all, my dear friend—and most deliciously placed at the extremity of the town, in an excellent house well furnished, and elegant beyond any thing I looked for—'Tis built in the form of a hotel, with a pretty court towards the town—and behind, the best gardens in Toulouse, laid out in serpentine walks, and so large that the company in our quarter usually come to walk there in the evenings, for which they have my consent— —, the more the merrier."

The house consists of a good *salle à manger* above stairs, joining to the very great *salle d compagnie*, as large as the Baron D'Holbach's; three handsome bed-chambers with dressing-rooms to them—below stairs two very good rooms for myself, one to study in, the other to see company.—I have moreover cellars round the court, and all other offices—Of the same landlord I have bargained to have the use of a country-house which he has two miles out of town, so that myself and all my family have nothing more to do than to take our hats and remove from the one to the other—My landlord is moreover to keep the gardens in order—And what do you think I am to pay for all this? Neither more or less than thirty pounds a year—All things are cheap in proportion—so we shall live for very very little.—I dined yesterday with Mr. H—He is most pleasantly situated, and they are all well—As for the books you have received for D—, the bookseller was a fool not to send the bill along with them—I will write to him about it.—I wish you was with me for two months; it would cure you of all evils

ghostly and bodily—But this, like many other wishes both for you and myself, must have it's completion elsewhere—Adieu, my kind friend, and believe that I love you as much from inclination as reason; for

I am most truly yours,

L. STERNE.

My wife and girl join in compliments to you—My best respects to my worthy Baron d'Holbach and all that society—Remember me to my friend Mr. Panchaud.

L E T T E R XXXII.

TO J. H. S. ESQ.

MY DEAR H.

Toulouse, Oct. 19, 1762.

I RECEIVED your letter yesterday—so it has been travelling from Crazy-Castle to Toulouse full gighteen days—If I had nothing to stop me, I would engage to set out this morning, and knock at Crazy-Castle gates in three days less time—by which time I should find you and the Colonel, Panty, etc. all alone—the season

I most wish and like to be with you—I rejoice from my heart down to my reins, that you have snatched so many happy and sunshiny days out of the hands of the blue devils—If we live to meet and join our forces as heretofore, we will give these gentry a drubbing—and turn them for ever out of their usurped citadel—Some legions of them have been put to flight already by your operations this last campaign—and I hope to have a hand in dispersing the remainder the first time my dear cousin sets up his banners again under the square tower — — But what art thou meditating with axes and hammers?—, *I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thy heart,*” and that thou lovest the sweet visions of architraves, friezes and pediments, with their tympanums; and thou hast found out a pretence, *à raison de cinq cents livres sterling* to be laid out in four years, etc. etc. (so as not to be felt, which is always added by the D— —l as a bait) to justify thyself unto thyself— —It may be very wise to do this—but ’tis wiser to keep one’s money in one’s pocket, whilst there are wars without, and rumours of wars with-

in. — St. — — advises his disciples to sell both coat and waistcoat—and go rather without shirt or sword, than leave no money in their scrip to go to Jerusalem with—Now those *quatre ans consecutifs*, my dear Anthony, are the most precious morsels of thy *life to come* (in this world), and thou wilt do well to enjoy that morsel without cares, calculations, and curses, and damns, and debts; for as sure as stone is stone, and mortar is mortar, etc. 'twill be one of the many works of thy repentance—But after all, if the Fates have decreed it, as you and I have some time supposed it, on account of your generosity, „*that you are never to be a monied man*,” the decree will be fulfilled, whether you adorn your castle and line it with cedar, and paint it within side and without side with vermillion, or not—*Et cela étant* (having a bottle of Frontiniae and glass at my right hand) I drink, dear Anthony, to thy health and happiness, and to the final accomplishments of all thy lunar and sublunar projects.—For six weeks together, after I wrote my last letter to you, my projects were many flo-

ries higher, for I was all that time, as I thought, journeying on to the other world—I fell ill of an epidemic vile fever, which killed hundreds about me—The physicians here are the arrantest charlatans in Europe, or the most ignorant of all pretending fools—I withdrew what was left of me out of their hands, and recommended my affairs entirely to Dame Nature—She (dear goddess) has saved me in fifty different pinching bouts, and I begin to have a kind of enthusiasm now in her favour and in my own, that one or two more escapes will make me believe I shall leave you all at last by translation, and not by fair death. I am now as stout and foolish again as a happy man can wish to be—and am busy playing the fool with my uncle Toby, whom I have got souped over head and ears in love.—I have many hints and projects for other works; all will go on, I trust, as I wish in this matter.—When I have reaped the benefit of this winter at Toulouse, I cannot see I have any thing more to do with it; therefore, after having gone with my wife and girl to Bagneres, I shall return from whence I came

—Now my wife wants to stay another year to save money, and this opposition of wishes, tho' it will not be as sour as lemon, yet 'twill not be as sweet as sugar-candy.—I wish T—would lead Sir Charles to Toulouse; 'tis as good as any town in the south of France—for my own part, 'tis not to my taste—but I believe, the ground-work of my *ennui* is more to the eternal placitude of the French character—little variety, no originality in it at all—than to any other cause—for they are very civil—but civility itself, in that uniform, wearies and bidders one to death.—If I do not mind, I shall grow most stupid and sententious—Miss Shandy is hard at it with musick, dancing, and French speaking, in the last of which she does *à merveille*, and speaks it with an excellent accent, considering she practises within sight of the Pyrenean Mountains.—If the snows will suffer me, I propose to spend two or three months at Barege, or Bagnieres; but my dear wife is against all schemes of additional expences—which wicked propensity (tho' not of despotick power) yet I cannot suffer—tho' by the

bye laudable enough—But she may talk—I will do my own way, and she will acquiesce without a word of debate on the subject.—Who can say so much in praise of his wife? Few I trow.—M——is out of town vintaging—so write to me, *Monsieur Sterne, gentilhomme Anglois*—'twill find me.—We are as much out of the road of all intelligence here as at the Cape of Good Hope—so write a long nonsensical letter like this, now and then to me—in which say nothing but what may be shewn, (tho' I love every paragraph and spirited stroke of your pen, others might not) for you must know a letter no sooner arrives from England, but Curiosity is upon her knees to know the contents.—Adieu, dear H. and believe me

Your affectionate

L. STERNE.

We have had bitter cold weather here these fourteen days—which has obliged us to sit with whole *pagells* of wood lighted up to our noses—'Tis a dear article—but every thing else being extremely cheap, Madam keeps an excellent good house, with *soupe, boulli, roti*—etc. etc. for two hundred and fifty pounds a year.

L E T T E R XXXIII.

TO MR. F. AT PARIS.

MY DEAR F—,

Toulouse, Nov. 9, 1762.

I HAVE had this week your letter on my table, and hope you will forgive my not answering it sooner—and even to-day I can but write you ten lines, being engaged at Mrs. M—'s. I would not omit one post more acknowledging the favour—In a few posts I will write you a long one gratis, that is for love—Thank you for having done what I desired you—and for the future direct to me under cover at Monsieur Brousse's—I receive all letters through him more punctually and sooner than when left at the posthouse—

H—'s family greet you with mine—we are much together and never forget you—Forget me not to the Baron—and all the circle—nor to your domestic circle—

I am got pretty well, and sport much with my uncle Toby in the volume I am now fabricating for the laughing part of

the world—for the melancholy part of it, I have nothing but my prayers—so God help them.—I shall hear from you in a post or two at least after you receive this—in the mean time, dear F—, adieu, and believe no man wishes or esteems you more than your

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R XXXIV.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR F—,

Toulouse, Dec. 17, 1762.

THE post after I wrote last—I received yours with the inclosed draught upon the receiver, for which I return you all thanks—I have received this day likewise the box and tea all safe and sound—so we shall all of us be in our cups this Christmas, and drink without fear or stint—We begin to live extremely happy, and are all together every night—fiddling, laughing and singing, and cracking jokes. You will scarce believe the news I tell you—

There are a company of English strollers arrived here, who are to act comedies all the Christmas, and are now busy in making dresses and preparing some of our best comedies—Your wonder will cease, when I inform you these strollers are your friends with the rest of our society, to whom I proposed this scheme *soulagement*—and I assure you we do well.—The next week, with a grand orchestra, we play the *Busy Body*—and the *Journey to London* the week after: but I have some thoughts of adapting it to our situation—and making it the *Journey to Toulouse*, which, with the change of half a dozen scenes, may be easily done.—Thus, my dear F. for want of something better we have recourse to ourselves, and strike out the best amusements we can from such materials.—My kind love and friendship to all my true friends—My service to the rest. H—'s family have just left me, having been this last week with us—they will be with me all the holidays.—In summer we shall visit them, and so balance hospitalities.

Adieu,

Yours most truly,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R XXXV.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR F——,

Toulouse, Wednesday, Dec. 3, 1762.

I HAVE for this last fortnight every post-day gone to Messrs. B— and sons, in expectation of the pleasure of a letter from you, with the remittance I desired you to send me here.—When a man has no more than half a dozen guineas in his pocket—and a thousand miles from home—and in a country where he can as soon raise the d—l as a six livres piece to go to market with, in case he has changed his last guinea—you will not envy my situation.—God bless you—remit me the balance due upon the receipt of this.—We are all at H—'s, practising a play we are to act here this Christmas holidays—All the *Dramatis Personae* are of the English, of which we have a happy society living together like brothers and sisters—Your banker here has just sent me word the tea Mr. H. wrote for is to be delivered into my hands—'tis

all one into whose hands the treasure falls
—we shall pay Brouffe for it the day we
get it—We join in our most friendly re-
spects, and believe me, dear F—, truly
yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XXXVI.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR F—,

Toulouse, March 29, 1763.

—THO' that's a mistake! I mean the
date of the place, for I write at Mr.
H— — —'s in the country, and have been
there with my people all the week—How
does Trifram do? you say in yours to
him—Faith, but so so—The worst of hu-
man maladies is poverty—though that is
a second lye—for poverty of spirit is worse
than poverty of purse, by ten thousand
per cent.—I inclose you a remedy for the
one, a draught of a hundred and thirty
pounds, for which I insist upon a rescrip-
tion by the very return—or I will send

you and all your commissaries to the d—l.
—I do not hear they have tasted of one
fleshy banquet all this Lent—You will
make an excellent *grillé*,—P— — —they
can make nothing of but *bouillon*.—I mean
my other two friends no ill—so shall send
them a reprieve, as they acted out of ne-
cessity—not choice—My kind respects to
Baron D'Holbach and all his household—
Say all that's kind for me to my other
friends—You know how much, dear
F— —, I am yours,

L. STERNE.

I have not five Louis to vapour within
this Land of Coxcombs—My wife's com-
pliments.

L E T T E R XXXVII.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR F—,

Toulouse, April 18, 1763.

I THANK you for your punctuality in
sending me the rescription, and for your
box by the courier, which came safe by
last post.—I was not surprised much with

your account of Lord ***** being obliged to give way—and for the rest, all follows in course.—I suppose you will endeavour to fish and catch something for yourself in these troubled waters—at least I wish you all a reasonable man can wish for himself—which is wishing enough for you—all the rest is in the brain—Mr. Woodhouse (who you know) is also here—he is a most amiable worthy man, and I have the pleasure of having him much with me—in a short time he proceeds to Italy.—The first week in June I decamp like a patriarch with my whole household, to pitch our tents for three months at the foot of the Pyrenean Hills at Bagnieres, where I expect much health and much amusement from the concourse of adventurers from all corners of the earth.—Mrs. M—sets out at the same time for another part of the Pyrenean Hills, at Courtray—from whence to Italy—This is the general plan of operation here—except that I have some thoughts of spending the winter at Florence, and crossing over with my family to Leghorn by water—and in April of returning by way of Paris home—But this

is a sketch only, for in all things I am governed by circumstances—so that what is fit to be done on Monday, may be very unwise on Saturday.—On all days of the week believe me yours,

With unfeigned truth,

L. STERNE.

P. S. All compliments to my Parisian friends.

L E T T E R XXXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR F—,

Toulouse, April 29, 1763.

LAST post my agent wrote me word he would send up from York a bill for four-score guineas, with orders to be paid into Mr. Selwin's hands for me. This he said he would expedite immediately, so 'tis possibly you may have had advice of it—and 'tis possible also the money may not be paid this fortnight; therefore as I set out for Bagnieres in that time, be so good as to give me credit for the money for a few posts or so, and send me either

a rescription for the money, or a draught for it—at the receipt of which we shall decamp for ten or twelve weeks—You will receive twenty pounds more on my account, which send also—So much for that—As for pleasure—you have it all amongst you at Paris—we have nothing here which deserves the name.—I shall scarce be tempted to sojourn another winter at Toulouse—for I cannot say it suits my health, as I hoped—'tis too moist—and I cannot keep clear of agues here—so that if I stay the next winter on this side of the water—'twill be either at Nice or Florence—and I shall return to England in April—Wherever I am, believe me, dear F—, that I am

Yours faithfully,

L. STERNE.

Madame and Mademoiselle present their best compliments—Remember me to all I regard, particularly Messrs. P—d, and the rest of your *household*.

L E T T E R XXXIX.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR,

Toulouse, May 21, 1763.

I TOOK the liberty three weeks ago to desire you would be so kind as to send me fourscore pounds, having received a letter the same post from my Agent, that he would order the money to be paid to your correspondent in London in a fortnight.—It is some disappointment to me that you have taken no notice of my letter, especially as I told you we waited for the money before we set out for Bagnieres;—and so little distrust had I that such a civility would be refused me, that we have actually had all our things packed up these eight days, in hourly expectation of receiving a letter.—Perhaps my good friend has waited till he heard the money was paid in London—but you might have trusted to my honour—that all the cash in your iron box (and all the bankers in Europe put together) could not have tempted me

to say the thing *that is not*.—I hope before this you will have received an account of the money being paid in London—But it would have been taken kindly, if you had wrote me word you would transmit me the money when you had received it, but no sooner; for Mr. R— of Montpellier, tho' I know him not, yet knows enough of me to have given me credit for a fortnight for ten times the sum.

I am, dear F—, your friend

and hearty well-wisher,

L. STERNE.

I saw the family of the H— — — yesterday, and asked them if you was in the land of the living—They said yea—for they had just received a letter from you.—After all, I heartily forgive you—for you have done me a signal service in mortifying me; and it is this, I am determined to grow rich upon it.

Adieu, and God send you wealth and happiness—All compliments to—Before April next I am obliged to revisit your metropolis in my way to England.

L E T T E R XL.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR F—,

Toulouse, June 9, 1763.

I THIS moment received yours—consequently the moment I got it I sat down to answer it—So much for a logical inference.

Now believe me I had never wrote you so testy a letter, had I not both loved and esteemed you—and it was merely in vindication of the rights of friendship that I wrote in a way as if I was hurt—for neglect me in your heart I knew you could not without cause, which my heart told me I never had—or will ever give you:—I was the best friends with you that ever I was in my life, before my letter had got a league, and pleaded the true excuse for my friend, „that he was oppressed with a multitude of business.” Go on, my dear F. and have but that excuse, (so much do I regard your interest) that I would be content to suffer a *real evil* without future

murmuring—But in truth my disappointment was partly chimerical at the bottom, having a letter of credit for two hundred pounds from a person I never saw, by me —But which out of a nicety of temper I would not make any use of—I set out in two days for Bagnieres, but direct to me to Brouffe, who will forward all my letters.—Dear F—, adieu.—Believe me

Yours affectionately,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XLI.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR F—,

Toulouse, June 12, 1763.

LUCKILY, just before I was stepping in to my chaise for Bagnieres, has a strayed fifty pound bill found it's way to me: so I have sent it to it's lawful owner inclosed—My noodle of an Agent, instead of getting Mr. Selwin to advise you he had received the money (which would have been enough) has got a bill for it, and sent it rambling to the furthest part of France af-

ter me ; and if it had not caught me just now , it might have followed me into Spain , for I shall cross the Pyrenees , and spend a week in that kingdom , which is enough for a fertile brain to write a volume upon—When I write the history of my travels—Memorandum ! I am not to forget how honest a man I have for a banker at Paris.—But , my dear friend , when you say you dare trust me for what little occasions I may have , you have as much faith as honesty—and more of both than of good policy.—I thank you however ten thousand times—and except such liberty as I have lately taken with you—and that too at a pinch—I say beyond that I will not trespass upon your good-nature or friendliness to serve me.—God bless you , dear F— —

I am yours whilst

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R XLII.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR F——,

Montpellier, Oct. 5, 1763.

I AM ashamed I have not taken an opportunity of thanking you before now for your friendly act of civility in ordering Brouffe, your correspondent at Toulouse, in case I should have occasion, to pay me fifteen hundred livres—which, as I knew the offer came from your heart, I made no difficulty of accepting, in my way thro' Toulouse to Marseilles, where we have been; but neither liking the place nor Aix (particularly the latter, it being a parliament town, of which Toulouse has given me a surfeit) we have returned here, where we shall reside the winter—My wife and daughter purpose to stay a year at least behind me—and when winter is over, to return to Toulouse, or go to Montauban, where they will stay till they return, or I fetch them—For myself, I shall set out in February for England, where my heart

has been fled these six months—but I shall stay a fortnight with my friends at Paris; tho' I verily believe, if it was not for the pleasure of seeing and chattering with you, I should pass on directly to Brussels, and so on to Rotterdam, for the sake of seeing Holland, and embark from thence to London—But I must stay a little with those I love, and have so many reasons to regard—you cannot place too much of this to your own score.—I have had an offer of going to Italy a fortnight ago—but I must like my subject as well as the terms, neither of which were to my mind—Pray what English have you at Paris? Where is my young friend Mr. F—? We hear of three or four English families coming to us here—If I can be serviceable to any you would serve, you have but to write.—Mr. H—has sent my friend W—'s picture—You have seen the original, or I would have sent it you—I believe I shall beg leave to get a copy of my own from yours, when I come in *propria persona*—till when, God bless you, my dear friend, and believe me

Most faithfully yours,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R XLIII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Montpellier, Jan. 5, 1764.

YOU see I cannot pass over the fifth of the month without thinking of you, and writing to you—The last is a periodical habit—the first is from my heart, and I do it oftener than I remember—however, from both motives together, I maintain I have a right to the pleasure of a single line—be it only to tell me how your watch goes—You know how much happier it would make me to know that all things belonging to you went on well.—You are going to have them all to yourself (I hear), and that Mr. S——is true to his first intention of leaving business—I hope this will enable you to accomplish yours in a shorter time, that you may get to your long-wished-for retreat of tranquillity and silence—When you have got to your fire-side, and into your arm-chair (and, by the bye, have another to spare for a friend) and are so

much a sovereign as to fit in your furred cap (if you like it, tho' I should not, for a man's ideas are at least the cleaner for being dressed decently) why then it will be a miracle if I do not glide in like a ghost upon you—and in a very unghost-like fashion help you off with a bottle of your best wine.

January 15.—It does not happen every day that a letter begun in the most perfect health should be concluded in the greatest weakness—I wish the vulgar high and low do not say it was a judgment upon me for taking all this liberty with *ghosts*—Be it as it may, I took a ride when the first part of this was wrote towards Perenas—and returned home in a shivering fit, tho' I ought to have been in a fever, for I had tired my beast; and he was as unmoveable as Don Quixote's wooden horse, and my arm was half dislocated in whipping him—This, quoth I, is inhuman—No, says a peasant on foot behind me, I'll drive him home—so he laid on his posteriors, but 'twas needless—as his face was turned towards Montpellier he began to trot.—But to return, this fever has con-

fin'd me ten days in my bed—I have suffered in this scuffle with Death terribly—but unless the spirit of prophecy deceives me—I shall not die but live—in the meantime, dear F. let us live as merrily but *as innocently* as we can—It has ever been as good, if not better, than a bishoprick to me—and *I desire no other*—Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me yours,

L. S.

Please to give the inclosed to Mr. T.—and tell him I thank him cordially from my heart for his great *good-will*.

L E T T E R XLIV.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Montpellier, Jan. 20.

HEARING by Lord R. who in passing thro' here in his way to Madrid has given me a call, that my worthy friend Mr. Fox was now at Paris—I have inclosed a letter to him, which you will present in course or direct to him.—I suppose you are full of English—but in short we are as if in another world, where unless some

strayed soul arrives, we know nothing of what is going on in yours.——Lord G—r I suppose is gone from Paris, or I had wrote also to him. I know you are as busy as a bee, and have few moments to yourself—nevertheless bestow one of them upon an old friend, and write me a line—and if Mr. F. is too idle and has aught to say to me, pray write a second line for him.—We had a letter from Miss P—this week, who it seems has decamped for ever from Paris—*All is for the best*—which is my general reflexion upon many things in this world.—Well! I shall shortly come and shake you by the hand in St. Sauveur—if still you are there.—My wife returns to Toulouse, and purposes to spend the summer at Bagnieres—I on the contrary go and visit my wife the church in Yorkshire.—We all live the longer—at least the happier—for having things our own way.—This is my conjugal maxim—I own 'tis not the best of maxims—but I maintain 'tis not the worst. Adieu dear F—, and believe me

Yours with truth,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R XLV.

TO MRS. F— —.

Montpellier, Feb. 1, 1764.

I AM preparing, my dear Mrs. F. to leave France, for I am heartily tired of it— — That insipidity there is in French characters has disgusted your friend Yorick.—I have been dangerously ill, and cannot think that the sharp air of Montpellier has been of service to me—and so my physicians told me when they had me under their hands for above a month—if you stay any longer here, Sir, it will be fatal to you—And why, good people, were you not kind enough to tell me this sooner?—After having discharged them, I told Mrs. S. that I should set out for England very soon; but as she chuses to remain in France for two or three years, I have no objection, except that I wish my girl in England.—The States of Languedoc are met—'tis a fine raree-show, with the usual accompanymments of fiddles, bears, and puppet-shows.—I believe I shall step into

my post-chaise with more alacrity to fly from these fights, than a Frenchman would to fly to them—and except a tear at parting with my little slut, I shall be in high spirits, and every step I take that brings me nearer England will I think help to set this poor frame to rights. Now pray write to me directed at Mr. F. at Paris, and tell me what I am to bring you over. —How do I long to greet all my friends! Few do I value more than yourself.—My wife chuses to go to Montauban, rather than stay here, in which I am truly passive.—If this should not find you at Bath, I hope it will be forwarded to you, as I wish to fulfil your commissions—and so adieu—Accept every warm wish for your health, and believe me ever yours,

L. STERNE.

P. S. My physicians have almost poisoned me with what they call *bouillons rafraichissans*—'tis a cock flayed alive and boiled with poppy-seeds, then pounded in a mortar, afterwards passed thro' a sieve—There is to be one crawfish in it, and I was gravely told it must be a male one—a female would do me more hurt than good.

L E T T E R XLVI.

TO MISS S— —.

MY DEAR LYDIA,

Paris, May 15, 1764.

BY this time I suppose your mother and self are fixed at Montauban, and I therefore direct to your banker, to be delivered to you.—I acquiesced in your staying in France—likewise it was your mother's wish—but I must tell you both that (unless your health had not been a plea made use of) I should have wished you both to return with me.—I have sent you the Spectators, and other books, particularly Metastasio; but I beg my girl to read the former, and only make the latter her amusement.—I hope you have not forget my last request, to make no friendships with the French women— —Not that I think ill of them all, but sometimes women of the best principles are the most *insinuating*—nay, I am so jealous of you, that I should be miserable were I to see you had the least grain of coquetry in your composition.—

You have enough to do—for I have also sent you a guittar—and as you have no genius for drawing, (tho' you never could be made to believe it) pray waste not your time about it—Remember to write me as to a friend—in short, whatever comes into your little head, and then it will be natural.—If your mother's rheumatism continues, and she chuses to go to Bagnieres—tell her not to be stopped for want of money, for my purse shall be as open as my heart. I have preached at the Ambassador's chapel—Hezekiah—(an odd subject, your mother will say). There was a concourse of all nations, and religions too.—I shall leave Paris in a few days—I am lodged in the same hotel with Mr. T——they are good and generous souls—Tell your mother that I hope she will write to me, and that when she does so, I may also receive a letter from my Lydia.

Kiss your mother from me, and believe me

Your affectionate

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R XLVII.

MY DEAR F—,

York, Aug. 6, 1764.

THERE is a young lady with whom I have sent a letter to you, who will arrive at Paris in her way to Italy—her name is Miss Tuting; a lady known and loved by the whole kingdom—If you can be of any aid to her in your advice, etc. as to her journey, etc. your good-nature and politeness I am sure need no spur from me to do it. I was sorry we were like the two buckets of a well, whilst in London, for we were never able to be both resident together the month I continued in and about the environs.—If I get a cough this winter which holds me three days, you will certainly see me at Paris the week following, for now I abandon every thing in this world to health and to my friends—for the last sermon that I shall ever preach, was preached at Paris—so I am altogether an idle man, or rather a free one, which is better. I sent, last post,

twenty pounds to Mrs. S. which makes a hundred pounds remitted since I got here—You must pay yourself what I owe you out of it—and place the rest to account.—Betwixt this and Lady-day next, Mrs. S. will draw from time to time upon you to about the amount of a hundred louis—but not more—(I think) I having left her a hundred in her pocket.—But you shall always have money beforehand of mine—and she purposes to spend no further than five thousand livres in the year—but twenty pounds, this way or that, makes no difference between us—Give my kindest compliments to Mr. P.—I have a thousand things to say to you, and would go half way to Paris to tell them you in your ear.—The Messrs. T—, H—, etc. and many more of your friends with whom I am now, send their services—Mine to all friends—Yours, dear F. most truly,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R XLVIII.

TO J— H— S—, ESQ.

September 4, 1764.

NOW, my dear, dear Anthony—I do not think a week or ten days playing the good fellow (at this very time) at Scarborough so abominable a thing—but if a man could get there cleverly, and every soul in his house in the mind to try what could be done in furtherance thereof, I have no one to consult in this affair—therefore as a man may do worse things, the English of all which is this, that I am going to leave a few poor sheep here in the wilderness for fourteen days—and from pride and naughtiness of heart to go see what is doing at Scarborough—steadfastly meaning afterwards to lead a new life and strengthen my faith.—Now some folks say there is much company there—and some say not—and I believe there is neither the one or the other—but will be both, if the world will have but a month's patience or so.—No, my dear H—, I did not delay send-

ing your letter directly to the post—As there are critical times or rather turns and revolutions in *** humours, I knew not what the delay of an hour might hazard—I will answer for him, he has seventy times seven forgiven you—and as often wished you at the d—l.—After many oscillations the pendulum will rest firm as ever.— —

I send all kind compliments to Sir C—D— —and G—s.—I love them from my soul—if G— — —t is with you, him also.—I go on, not rapidly; but well enough with my uncle Toby's amours—There is no fitting and cudgelling one's brains whilst the sun shines bright—'twill be all over in six or seven weeks, and there are dismal months enough after to endure suffocation by a brimstone fire-side.—If you can get to Scarborough, do.—A man who makes six ton of alum a week, may do any thing—Lord G—y is to be there—what a temptation!

Your's affectionately,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R XLIX.

TO MR. F. AT PARIS.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

York, Sept. 29, 1764.

I HAVE just had the honour of a letter from Miss Tuting, full of the acknowledgments of your attention and kind services to her. I will not believe these arose from the D. of A—'s letters, nor mine. Surely *she needed no recommendation*—The truest and most honest compliment I can pay you, is to say they came from your own good heart, only you was introduced to the object—for the rest followed in course—However, let me cast in my mite of thanks to the treasury which belongs to good-natured actions. I have been with Lord G—y these three weeks at Scarborough—the pleasures of which I found somewhat more exalted than those of Bagnieres last year—I am now returned to my Philosophical Hut to finish Tristram, which I calculate will be ready for the world about Christmas, at which time I

decamp from hence, and for my headquarters at London for the winter—unless my cough pushes me forwards to your metropolis—or that I can persuade some *gros* my Lord to take a trip to you—I'll try if I can make him relish the joys of the *Tuilleries*, *Opera Comique*, etc.

I had this week a letter from Mrs. S— from Montauban, in which she tells me she has occasion for fifty pounds immediately—Will you send an order to your correspondent at Montauban to pay her so much cash—and I will in three weeks send as much to Becket—But as her purse is low, for God's sake write directly.—Now you must do something equally essential to rectify a mistake in the mind of your correspondent there, who it seems gave her a hint not long ago, „*that she was separated from me for life.*”—Now as this is not true in the first place, and may give a disadvantageous impression of her to those she lives amongst—'twould be unmerciful to let her, or my daughter, suffer by it; so do be so good as to undeceive him—for in a year or two she proposes (and indeed I expect it with impatience

from her) to rejoin me—and tell them I have all the confidence in the world she will not spend more than I can afford, and I only mentioned two hundred guineas a year—because 'twas right to name some certain sum, for which I begged you to give her credit.—I write to you of all my most intimate concerns, as to a brother, so excuse me dear F— —. God bless you —Believe me

Yours affectionately,

L. STERNE.

Compliments to Mr. Panchaud, D'Holbach, etc.

LETTER L.

TO J— — H— — S— —, ESQ.

MY DEAR COUSIN,

Coxwold, — Thursday.

I AM but this moment returned from Scarborough, where I have been drinking the waters ever since the races, and have received marvellous strength, had I not debilitated it as fast as I got it, by playing the good fellow with Lord G—y and Co.

too much. I rejoice you have been encamped at Harrowgate, from which, by now, I suppose you are decamped—otherwise, as idle a beast as I have been, I would have sacrificed a few days to the god of laughter with you and your jolly set.—I have done nothing good that I know of, since I left you, except paying off your guinea and a half to K—, in my way thro' York hither—I must try now and do better—Go on and prosper for a month.

Your affectionate,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LI.

TO MR. F. AT PARIS.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

York, Nov. 11, 1764.

I SENT ten days ago, a bank bill of thirty pounds to Mr. Becket, and this post one of sixty—When I get to London, which will be in five weeks, you will receive what shall always keep you in bank for Mrs. S—; in the mean time I have desired Becket to send you fourscore

pounds, and if my wife before I get to London should have occasion for fifty louis, let her not wait a minute, and if I have not paid it, a week or a fortnight I know will break no squares with a good and worthy friend.—I will contrive to send you these two new volumes of Tristram, as soon as ever I get them from the press.—You will read as odd a tour thro' France as ever was projected or executed by traveller or travel-writers since the world began—'Tis a laughing good-tempered satire against travelling (as *puppies* travel).—Panchaud will enjoy it—I am quite civil to your Parisians—*et pour cause* you know—'tis likely I may see them in spring—Is it possible for you to get me over a copy of my picture any how? If so, I would write to Mademoiselle N—to make as good a copy from it as she possibly could—with a view to do her service here—and I would remit her the price—I really believe it would be the parent of a dozen portraits to her, if she executes it with the spirit of the original in your hands—for it will be seen by many—and as my phiz is as remarkable as myself, if she

preserves the true character of both, it will do her honour and service too. Write me a line about this, and tell me you are well and happy—Will you present my kind respects to the worthy Baron?—I shall send him one of the best impressions of my picture from Mr. Reynolds's—another to Monsieur P—.—My love to Mr. S—n and Panchaud.

I am most truly yours,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LII.

TO J. H. S. ESQ.

MY DEAR COUSIN,

Nov. 13, 1764.

'TIS a church militant week with me, full of marches, and counter-marches—and treaties about Stillington common, which we are going to inclose—otherwise I would have obey'd your summons—And yet I could not well have done it this week neither, having received a letter from C—, who has been very ill; and is coming down to stay a week or ten days

with me.—Now I know he is ambitious of being better acquainted with you; and longs from his soul for a sight of you in your own Castle.—I cannot do otherwise than bring him with me—nor can I gallop away and leave him an empty house to pay a visit to from London, as he comes half express to see me.—I thank you for the care of my northern vintage—I fear after all I must give it a fermentation on the other side of the Alps, which is better than being on the lees with it—but *nous verrons*—yet I fear as it has got such hold of my brain, and comes upon it like an armed man at nights—I must give way for quietness sake, or be hag-ridden with the conceit of it all my life long.—I have been *Miss-ridden* this last week by a couple of romping girls (*bien mises et comme il faut*) who might as well have been in the house with me (tho' perhaps not, my retreat here is too quiet for them); but they have taken up all my time, and have given my judgment and fancy more airings than they wanted.—These things accord not well with sermon-making—but 'tis my vile errantry, as Sancho says, and that is

all that can be made of it.—I trust all goes swimmingly on with your alum, that the works amuse you, and call you twice out (at least) a day.—I shall see them I trust in ten days or thereabout—If it was any way possible, I would set out this moment, tho' I have no cavalry (*except a she ass*). Give all friendly respects to Mrs. C. and to Col. H——'s, and the garrison both of Guisbro' and Skelton—I am, dear Anthony, affectionately

Yours,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LIII.

TO MR. F. AT PARIS.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

York, Nov. 16, 1764.

THREE posts before I had the favour of yours (which is come to hand this moment) I had wrote to set Mrs. S. right in her mistake—that you had any money of mine in your hands—being very sensible that the hundred pounds I had sent you, thro' Becket's hands, was but about what

would balance with you—The reason of her error was owing to my writing her word, I would send you a bill in a post or two for fifty pounds—which, my finances falling short just then, I deferred—so that I had paid nothing to any one—but was however come to York this day, and I have sent you a draught for a hundred pounds—in honest truth, a fortnight ago I had not the cash—but I am as honest as the King (as Sancho Pança says), *only not so rich.*

Therefore if Mrs. S. should want thirty louis more, let her have them—and I will balance all (which will not be much) with honour at Christmas, when I shall be in London, having now just finished my two volumes of Tristram.—I have some thoughts of going to Italy this year—at least I shall not defer it above another.— —I have been with Lord Granby, and with Lord Shelburne, but am now sat down till December in my sweet retirement—I wish you was sat down as happily, and as free of all worldly cares.—In a few years, my dear F. I hope to see you a real country gentleman, tho' not altogether exiled from

your friends in London—There I shall spend every winter of my life in the same lap of contentment where I enjoy myself now—and wherever I go—We must bring three parts in four of the treat along with us—in short, we must be happy within—and then few things without us make much difference—This is my Shandeyan philosophy.—You will read a comic account of my journey from Calais thro' Paris to the Garonne in these volumes—my friends tell me they are done with spirit—it must speak for itself—Give my kind respects to Mr. Selwin and my friend Panchaud—When you see Baron d'Holbach, present him my respects, and believe me, dear F.

Your's cordially,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LIV.

TO D. GARRICK, ESQ.

DEAR GARRICK,

London, March 16, 1765.

I THREATENED you with a letter in one I wrote a few weeks ago to Foley,

but (to my shame be it spoken) I lead such a life of dissipation, that I have never had a moment to myself which has not been broke in upon by one engagement or impertinence or another—and as plots thicken towards the latter end of a piece, I find unless I take pen and ink just now, I shall not be able to do it till either I am got into the country, or you to the city. You are teased and tormented too much by your correspondents to return to us, and with accounts how much your friends and how much your Theatre wants you—so that I will not magnify either our loss or yours—but hope cordially to see you soon.—Since I wrote last I have frequently stepped into your house—that is, as frequently as I could take the whole party, where I dined, along with me—This was but justice to you, as I walked in as a wit—but with regard to myself, I balanced the account thus—I am sometimes in my friend——'s house, but he is always in Tristram Shandy's—where my friends say he will continue (and I hope the prophecy true for my own immortality) even when he himself is no more.

I have had a lucrative winter's campaign here—Shandy sells well—I am taxing the publick with two more volumes of sermons, which will more than double the gains of Shandy—It goes into the world with a prancing list of *de toute la noblesse*—which will bring me in three hundred pounds, exclusive of the sale of the copy—so that with all the contempt of money which *ma façon de penser* has ever impressed on me, I shall be rich in spite of myself: but I scorn, you must know, in the high *ton* I take at present, to pocket all this trash—I set out to lay a portion of it in the service of the world, in a tour round Italy, where I shall spring game, or the deuce is in the dice.—In the beginning of September I quit England, that I may avail myself of the time of vintage, when all nature is joyous, and so saunter philosophically for a year or so on the other side the Alps.—I hope your pilgrimages have brought Mrs. G. and yourself back *à la fleur de jeunesse*—May you both long feel the sweets of it, and your friends with you.—Do, dear friend, make my kindest wishes and compliments accept-

able to the best and wisest of the daughters of Eve—You shall ever believe and ever find me affectionately yours,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LV.

TO D. GARRICK, ESQ.

Bath, April 6, 1765.

I SCALP you!—my dear Garrick! my dear friend! Foul befall the man who hurts a hair of your head!—and so full was I of that very sentiment, that my letter had not been put into the post-office ten minutes before my heart smote me: and I sent to recall it—but failed—You are sadly to blame, Shandy! for this, quoth I, leaning with my head on my hand, as I recriminated upon my false delicacy in the affair—Garrick's nerves (if he has any left) are as fine and delicately spun as thy own—his sentiments as honest and friendly—Thou knowest, Shandy, that he loves thee—why wilt thou hazard him a moment's pain? Puppy! fool, coxcomb, jack-ass, etc. etc.—and so I balanced the account

to your favour, before I received it drawn up in *your way*—I *say your way*—for it is not stated so much to your honour and credit, as I had passed the account before—for it was a most lamented truth, that I never received one of the letters your friendship meant me, except whilst in Paris.—O! how I congratulate you for the anxiety the world has and continues to be under for your return.—Return, return to the few who love you, and the thousands who admire you.—The moment you set your foot upon your stage—mark! I tell it you—by some magic, irresistible power, every fibre about your heart will vibrate afresh, and as strong and feelingly as ever—Nature, with glory at her back, will light up the torch within you—and there is enough of it left to heat and enlighten the world these many, many years.

Heaven be praised! (I utter it from my soul) that your lady, and my Minerva, is in a condition to walk to Windsor—Full rapturously will I lead the graceful pilgrim to the temple, where I will sacrifice with the purest incense to her—but you may worship with me, or not—'twill make no

difference either in the truth or warmth of my devotion—still (after all I have seen) I still maintain her peerless.

P——! good Heaven! give me some one with less smoke and more fire—There are those who, like the Pharisees, still think they shall be heard for *much* speaking—— Come—come away, my dear Garrick, and teach us another lesson.

Adieu!—I love you dearly—and your lady better—not hobbihorfically—but most sentimentally and affectionately—for I am yours (that is, if you never say another word about——) with all the sentiments of love and friendship you deserve from me,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LVI.

MY DEAR F—,

Bath, April 15, 1765.

MY wife tells me she has drawn for one hundred pounds, and 'tis fit that you should be paid it that minute—the money is now in Becket's hands—Send me, my dear F——my account, that I may dis-

charge the balance to this time, and know what to leave in your hands.—I have made a good campaign of it this year in the field of the literati—my two volumes of Triftram, and two of sermons, which I shall print very soon, will bring me a considerable sum.—Almost all the nobility in England honour me with their names, and 'tis thought it will be the largest and most splendid list which ever pranced before a book since subscriptions came into fashion.—Pray present my most sincere compliments to lady H——, whose name I hope to insert with many others.—As so many men of genius favour me with their names also, I will quarrel with Mr. H——e, and call him deist, and what not, unless I have his name too. My love to Lord W.—Your name, F. I have put in as a free-will offering of my labours—your list of subscribers you will send—'Tis but a crown for sixteen sermons—Dog cheap! but I am in quest of honour, not money.—Adieu, adieu!—believe me, dear F.

Yours truly,

L. STERNE.

Sterne's Letters.

N

L E T T E R LVII.

TO MR. W.

Coxwold, May 23, 1765.

AT this moment am I sitting in my summer-house with my head and heart full, not of my uncle Toby's amours with the Widow Wadman, but my Sermons—and your letter has drawn me out of a pensive mood—The spirit of it *pleaseth me*—but in this solitude, what can I tell or write to you but about myself?—I am glad that you are in love—'twill cure you (at least) of the spleen, which has a bad effect on both man and woman—I myself must ever have some Dulcinea in my head—it harmonises the soul—and in those cases I first endeavour to make the lady believe so, or rather I begin first to make myself believe that I am in love—but I carry on my affairs quite in the French way, sentimentally—, „*L'amour*” (say they) „*n'est rien sans sentiment*” —Now notwithstanding they make such a pother about the *word*, they have no precise idea annexed to it—

And so much for that same subject called love—I must tell you how I have just treated a French gentleman of fortune in France who took a liking to my daughter—Without any ceremony (having got my direction from my wife's banker) he wrote me word that he was in love with my daughter, and desired to know what *fortune* I would give her at present, and how much at my *death*—By the bye, I think there was very little *sentiment* on *his side*—My answer was, „Sir, I shall give her ten thousand pounds the day of marriage.—My calculation is as follows:—she is not eighteen, you are sixty-two—there goes five thousand pounds.—Then, Sir, you at least think her not ugly—she has many accomplishments, speaks Italian, French, plays upon the guittar, and as I fear you play upon no instrument whatever, I think you will be happy to take her at my terms, for here finishes the account of the ten thousand pounds.”—I do not suppose but he will take this as I mean, that is—a flat refusal—I have had a parsonage-house burnt down by the carelessness of my curate's wife—As soon as I can I must re-

build it, I trow—but I lack the means at present—yet I am never happier than when I have not a shilling in my pocket—for when I have I can never call it my own. Adieu, my dear friend—may you enjoy better health than me, tho' not better spirits, for that is impossible.

Yours sincerely,

L. STERNE.

My compliments to the Colonel.

L E T T E R LVIII.

TO MR. F. AT PARIS.

MY DEAR SIR,

York, July 13, 1765.

I WROTE some time in spring, to beg you would favour me with my account. I believe you was set out from Paris, and that Mr. Garrick brought the letter with him—which possibly he gave you. In the hurry of your business you might forget the contents of it; and in the hurry of mine in town (though I called once) I could not get to see you. I decamp for Italy in Sep-

tember, and shall see your face at Paris, you may be sure—but I shall see it with more pleasure when I am out of debt—which is your own fault, for Becket has had money left in his hands for that purpose.—Do send Mrs. Sterne her two last volumes of Tristram; they arrived with your's in spring, and she complains she has not got them.—My best services to Mr. Panchaud.—I am busy composing two volumes of sermons—they will be printed in September, though I fear not time enough to bring them with me. Your name is amongst the list of a few of my honorary subscribers—who subscribe for love.—If you see Baron d'Holbach and Diderot, present my respects to them.—If the Baron wants any English books, he will let me know, and I will bring them with me.—Adieu.

I am truly your's,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LIX.

TO MRS. M—D—S.

Coxwold, July 21, 1765.

THE first time I have dipped my pen into the ink-horn for this week past is to write to you, and to thank you most sincerely for your kind epistle—Will this be a sufficient apology for my letting it be ten days upon my table without answering it?—I trust it will—I am sure my own feelings tell me so, because I felt it impossible to do any thing that is ungracious towards you—It is not every hour, or day, or week of a man's life that is a fit season for the duties of friendship—Sentiment is not always at hand—pride and folly, and what is called business, oftentimes keep it at a distance—and without sentiment, what is friendship?—A name, a shadow!—But, to prevent a misapplication of this, (though why should I fear it from so kind and gentle a spirit as your's)—you must know, that by the carelessness of my curate, or his wife, or his maid, or

some one within his gates, the parsonage-house at Sutton was burnt to the ground, with the furniture that belonged to me, and a pretty good collection of books; the loss three hundred and fifty pounds—The poor man with his wife took the wings of the next morning, and fled away—This has given me real vexation, for so much was my pity and esteem for him, that as soon as I heard of this disaster, I sent to desire he would come and take up his abode with me till another habitation was ready to receive him—but he was gone—and, as I am told, through fear of my persecution.—Heavens! how little did he know of me to suppose I was among the number of those wretches that heap misfortune upon misfortune—and when the load is almost insupportable, still to add to the weight! God, who reads my heart, knows it to be true—that I wish rather to share, than to increase the burthen of the miserable—to dry up, instead of adding a single drop to the stream of sorrow.—As for the dirty trash of this world, I regard it not—the loss of it does not cost me a sigh; for after all, I may say with the

Spanish Captain, that I am as good a gentleman as the King, only not quite so rich.

But to the point: Shall I expect you here this summer?—I much wish that you may make it convenient to gratify me in a visit for a few weeks—I will give you a roast fowl for your dinner, and a clean tablecloth every day—and tell you a story by way of dessert—In the heat of the day we will sit in the shade—and in the evening the fairest of all the milk-maids who pass by my gate shall weave a garland for you.—If I should not be so fortunate, contrive to meet me the beginning of October—I shall stay a fortnight after, and then seek a kinder climate.—This plaguy cough of mine seems to gain ground, and will bring me to my grave in spite of me—but while I have strength to run away from it I will—I have been wrestling with it for these twenty years past—and what with laughter and good spirits have prevented it's giving me a fall—but my antagonist presses closer than ever upon me—and I have nothing left on my side but another journey abroad—A-propos are you for a scheme of that

fort? If not, perhaps you will accompany me as far as Dover, that we may laugh together on the beach, to put Neptune in a good humour before I embark—God bless you, my dear Madam,——and believe me ever your's,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LX.

TO MR. W.

Coxwold, Dec. 20, 1765.

THANKS, my dear W. for your letter—I am just preparing to come and greet you and many other friends in town—I have drained my ink standish to the bottom, and after I have published, shall set my face, not towards Jerusalem, but towards the Alps—I find I must once more fly from Death whilst I have strength—I shall go to Naples, and see whether the air of that place will not set this poor frame to rights—As to the project of getting a bear to lead, I think I have enough to do to govern myself—and however profitable it might be (according to your opinion) I am

sure it would be unpleasurable—Few are the minutes of life, and I do not think that I have any to throw away on any one being.—I shall spend nine or ten months in Italy, and call upon my wife and daughter in France at my return—so shall be back by the King's birth-day—What a project! And now my dear friend am I going to York, not for the sake of society—not to walk by the side of the muddy Ouse, but to recruit myself of the most violent spitting of blood that ever mortal man experienced; because I had rather (in case 'tis ordained so) die there, than in a post-chaise on the road.—If the amour of my uncle Toby do not please you, I am mistaken—and so with a droll story I will finish this letter.—A sensible friend of mine, with whom not long ago I spent some hours in conversation, met an apothecary (an acquaintance of ours)—The latter asked him how he did? Why ill, very ill. I have been with Sterne, who has given me such a dose of *Attic salt* that I am in a fever—Attic salt, Sir, Attic salt! I have Glauber salt, I have Epsom salt in my shop, etc. Oh! I suppose 'tis some French salt! I

wonder you would trust his report of the medicine ; he cares not what he takes himself. — I fancy I see you smile—I long to be able to be in London , and embrace my friends there—and shall enjoy myself a week or ten days at Paris with my friends , particularly the Baron d'Holbach , and the rest of the joyous set—As to the females—no , I will not say a word about them—only I hate borrowed characters taken up (as a woman does her shift) for the purpose she intends to effectuate. Adieu , adieu —I am yours whilst

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LXI.

TO MR. F. AT PARIS.

DEAR SIR ,

London , Oct. 7. 1765.

IT is a terrible thing to be in Paris without a perriwig to a man's head ! In seven days from the date of this I shall be in that case , unless you tell your neighbour Madame Requiere to get her *bon mari de me faire une peruque à bourse , au mieux—*

*c'est à dire—une la plus extraordinaire—
la plus jolie — la plus gentille — et la
plus— —*

*—Mais qu'importe? J'ai l'honneur d'être
grand critique—et bien difficile encore
dans les affaires de peruques—and in one
word, that he gets it done in five days
after notice—*

I beg pardon for this liberty, my dear
friend, and for the trouble of forwarding
this by the very next post.—If my friend
Mr. F. is in Paris, my kind love to him
and respects to all others—In sad haste—

Yours truly,

L. STERNE.

I have paid into Mr. Becket's hands six
hundred pounds, which you may draw
upon at sight, according as either Mrs. S—
— —or myself make it expedient.

L E T T E R LXII.

TO MR. P. AT PARIS.

DEAR SIR,

Beau Pont Voisin, Nov. 7. 1765.

I FORGOT to desire you to forward whatever letters came to your hand to your banker at Rome, to wait for me against I get there, as it is uncertain how long I may stay at Turin, etc. etc. At present I am held prisoner in this town by the sudden swelling of two pitiful rivulets from the snows melting on the Alps — so that we cannot either advance to them, or retire back again to Lyons — for how long the gentlemen who are my fellow-travellers and myself shall languish in this state of vexatious captivity, heaven and earth surely know, for it rains as if they were coming together to settle the matter. — I had an agreeable journey to Lyons, and a joyous time there, dining and supping every day at the commandant's — Lord F. W. I left there, and about a dozen English — If you see Lord Ossory, Lord

William Gordon, and my friend Mr. Crawford, remember me to them — If Wilkes is at Paris yet, I send him all kind wishes — Present my compliments as well as thanks to my good friend Miss P — —, and believe me, dear Sir, with all truth, yours,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LXIII.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR,

Turin, Nov. 15, 1765.

AFTER many difficulties I have got here safe and sound—tho' eight days in passing the mountains of Savoy. — I am stopped here for ten days by the whole country betwixt here and Milan being laid under water by continual rains—but I am very happy, and have found my way into a dozen houses already—To-morrow I am to be presented to the King, and when that ceremony is over, I shall have my hands full of engagements — No English here but Sir James Macdonald, who meets with much respect, and Mr. Ogilby. We

are all together, and shall depart in peace together — My kind services to all — Pray forward the inclosed —

Yours most truly,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LXIV.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR,

Turin, Nov. 28, 1765.

I AM just leaving this place with Sir James Macdonald for Milan, etc. — We have spent a joyous fortnight here, and met with all kinds of honours — and with regret do we both bid adieu — but health on my side — and good sense on his — say 'tis better to be at Rome — you say at Paris — but you put variety out of the question — I entreat you to forward the inclosed to Mrs. Sterne — My compliments to all friends, more particularly to those I most value (that includes Mr. F. if he is at Paris).

I am yours most truly,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LXV.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR,

Florence, Dec. 18, 1765.

I HAVE been a month passing the plains of Lombardy—stopping in my way at Milan, Parma, Placenza, and Bologna—with weather as delicious as a kindly April in England, and have been three days in crossing a part of the Appennines covered with thick snow—Sad transition! —I stay here three days to dine with our Plenipo Lords T—d and C—r, and in five days shall tread the Vatican and be introduced to all the Saints in the Pantheon. I stay but fourteen days to pay these civilities, and then decamp for Naples. Pray send the inclosed to my wife, and Becket's letter to London.

Yours truly,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LXVI.

TO MISS. S.

MY DEAR GIRL,

Naples, Feb. 3, 1766.

YOUR letter, my Lydia, has made me both laugh and cry—Sorry am I that you are both so afflicted with the ague, and by all means I wish you both to fly from Tours, because I remember it is situated between two rivers, la Loire and le Cher—which must occasion fogs, and damp unwholesome weather—therefore for the same reason go not to Bourges en Bresse—'tis as vile a place for agues.—I find myself infinitely better than I was—and hope to have added at least ten years to my life by this journey to Italy—The climate is heavenly, and I find new principles of health in me, which I have been long a stranger to—but trust me, my Lydia, I will find you out wherever you are, in May; therefore I beg you to direct to me at Belloni's at Rome, that I may have some idea where you will be then.—The

account you give me of Mrs. C— —is truly amiable: I shall ever honour her—Mr. C. is a diverting companion—What he said of your little French admirer was truly droll—The Marquis de— — —is an impostor, and not worthy of your acquaintance—he only pretended to know me, to get introduced to your mother—I desire you will get your mother to write to Mr. C. that I may discharge every debt, and then, my Lydia, if I live, the produce of my pen shall be yours—If fate reserves me not that—the humane and good, part for thy father's sake, part for thy own, will never abandon thee!—If your mother's health will permit her to return with me to England, your summers I will render as agreeable as I can at Coxwold—your winters at York—you know my publications call me to London.—If Mr. and Mrs. C—are still at Tours, thank them from me for their cordiality to my wife and daughter. I have purchased you some little trifles, which I shall give you when we meet, as proofs of affection from

Your fond father,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LXVII.

TO MR. F. AT PARIS.

DEAR SIR,

Naples, Feb. 8, 1766.

I DESIRE Mrs. S — — may have what cash she wants—if she has not received it before now : she sends me word she has been in want of cash these three weeks—be so kind as to prevent this uneasiness to her—which is doubly so to me.—I have made very little use of your letters of credit, having since I left Paris taken up no more money than about fifty louis at Turin, and as much at Rome—and a few ducats here—and as I now travel from hence to Rome, Venice, through Vienna to Berlin, etc. with a gentleman of fortune, I shall draw for little more till my return—so you will have always enough to spare for my wife.—The beginning of March be so kind as to let her have a hundred pounds to begin her year with.—

There are a good many English here, very few in Rome, or other parts of Ita-

ly.—The air of Naples agrees very well with me—I shall return fat—My friendship to all who honour me with theirs—Adieu, my dear friend—I am ever yours,
L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LXVIII.

TO J. H. S. ESQ.

MY DEAR H.

Naples, Feb. 5, 1766.

'TIS an age since I have heard from you—but as I read the London Chronicle, and find no tidings of your death, or that you are even at the point of it, I take it, as I wish it, that you have got over thus much of the winter free from the damps both of climate and spirits:—and here I am, as happy as a King after all, growing fat, sleek, and well liking—not improving in stature, but in breadth—We have a jolly carnival of it—nothing but operas—punchinellos—festinos and masquerades—We (that is *nous autres*) are all dressing out for one this night at the Princess Francavivalla, which is to be su-

perb.—The English dine with her (exclusive)—And so much for small chat—except that I saw a little comedy acted last week with more expression and spirit and true character than I shall see one hastily again.—I stay here till the holy week, which I shall pass at Rome, where I occupy myself a month—My plan was to have gone from thence for a fortnight to Florence—and then by Leghorn to Marseilles directly home—but I am diverted from this by the repeated proposals of accompanying a gentleman who is returning by Venice, Vienna, Saxony, Berlin, and so by the Spa, and thence through Holland, to England—'Tis with Mr. E——I have known him these three years, and have been with him ever since I reached Rome; and as I know him to be a good-hearted young gentleman, I have no doubt of making it answer both his views and mine—at least I am persuaded we shall return home together, as we set out, with friendship and good will.—Write your next letter to me at Rome, and do me the following favour if it lies in your way, which I think it does—to get me a letter of recommen-

dation to our Ambassador (Lord Stormont) at Vienna. I have not the honour to be known to his Lordship, but Lords P—— or H——, or twenty you better know, would write a certificate for me, importing that I am not fallen out of the clouds. If this will cost my cousin little trouble, do inclose it in your next letter to me at Belloni's — You have left Skelton I trow a month, and I fear have had a most sharp winter, if one may judge of it from the severity of the weather here, and all over Italy, which exceeded any thing known till within these three weeks here, that the sun has been as hot as we could bear it. Give my kind services to my friends — especially to the household of faith — my dear Garland — to Gilbert — to the worthy Colonel — to Cardinal S—— — to my fellow-labourer Pantagruel — Dear cousin Antony, receive my kindest love and wishes.

Yours affectionately,

L. STERNE.

P. S. Upon second thoughts, direct your next to me at Mr. W. banker at Venice.

L E T T E R LXIX.

TO MR. P. AT PARIS.

DEAR SIR,

Naples, Feb. 14, 1766.

I WROTE last week to you, to desire you would let Mrs. S——have what money she wanted—It may happen, as that letter went inclosed in one to her at Tours, that you will receive this first—I have made little use of your letters of credit, as you will see by that letter, nor shall I want much (if any) till you see me, as I travel now in company with a gentleman—however, as we return by Venice, Vienna, Berlin, etc. to the Spa, I should be glad if you will draw me a letter of credit upon some one at Venice to the extent of fifty louis—but I am persuaded I shall not want half of them—however, in case of sickness or accidents, one would not go so long a route without money in one's pocket—The bankers here are not so conscientious as my friend P. they would make me pay twelve per cent, if I was to get a letter

here. I beg your letters, etc. may be inclosed to Mr. Watſon at Venice — where we ſhall be in the Aſcenſion—I have received much benefit from the air of Naples —but quit it to be at Rome before the holy week.—There are about five and twenty Engliſh here — but moſt of them will be decamped in two months — There are ſcarce a third of the number at Rome—I ſuppoſe therefore that Paris is full—My warmeſt wiſhes attend you — With my love to Mr. F. and compliments to all, I am, dear Sir, very faithfully,

Yours,

L. STERNE.

Sir James Macdonald is in the houſe with me, and is juſt recovering a long and moſt cruel fit of the rheumatism.

LETTER LXX.

TO J. H. S. ESQ.

DEAR ANTHONY,

May 25, near Dijon.

MY deſire of ſeeing both my wife and girl has turned me out of my road towards

a delicious Chateau of the Countess of M—, where I have been patriarching it these seven days with her ladyship and half a dozen of very handsome and agreeable ladies—Her ladyship has the best of hearts—a valuable present not given to every one.—To-morrow, with regret, I shall quit this agreeable circle, and post it night and day to Paris, where I shall arrive in two days, and just wind myself up, when I am there, enough to roll on to Calais—so I hope to sup with you the King's birth-day, according to a plan of sixteen days standing.—Never man has been such a wildgoose-chase after a wife as I have been—After having sought her in five or six different towns, I found her at last in *Franche Comté*—Poor woman! she was very cordial, etc. and begs to stay another year or so—My Lydia pleases me much—I found her greatly improved in every thing I wished her—I am most unaccountably well, and most accountably nonsensical—'tis at least a proof of good spirits, which is a sign and token given me in these latter days that I must take up again the pen.—In faith, I think I

shall die with it in my hand; but I shall live these ten years, my Anthony, notwithstanding the fears of my wife, whom I left most melancholy on that account.— This is a delicious part of the world! most celestial weather! and we lie all day, without damps, upon the grass—and that is the whole of it; except the inner man (for her ladyship is not stingy of her wine) is inspired twice a day with the best Burgundy that grows upon the mountains, which terminate our lands here.—Surely you will not have decamped to Crazy Castle before I reach town.—The summer here is set-in in good earnest—'tis more than we can say for Yorkshire—I hope to hear a good tale of your alum-works—Have you no other works in hand? I do not expect to hear from you, so God prosper you—and all your undertakings.—I am, my dear cousin,

Most affectionately yours,

L. STERNE.

Remember me to Mr. G——, Cardinal S——, the Colonel etc. etc. etc.

L E T T E R LXXI.

TO MR. P. AT PARIS.

DEAR SIR,

York, June 28, 1766.

I WROTE last week to Mr. Becket to discharge the balance due to you - and I have received a letter from him telling me, that if you will draw upon him for one hundred and sixty pounds, he will punctually pay it to your order - so send the draughts when you please - Mrs. S. writes me word, she wants fifty pounds - which I desire you will let her have - I will take care to remit it to your correspondent - I have such an entire confidence in my wife, that she spends as little as she can, tho' she is confined to no particular sum - Her expences will not exceed three hundred pounds a year, unless by ill health, or a journey - and I am very willing she should have it - and you may rely, in case it ever happens that she should draw for fifty or a hundred pounds extraordinary, that it and every demand

shall be punctually paid—and with proper thanks; and for this the whole Shandeyan family are ready to stand security. — 'Tis impossible to tell you how sorry I was that my affairs hurried me so quick thro' Paris, as to deprive me of seeing my old friend Mr. F. and of the pleasure I proposed in being made known to his better half—but I have a probability of seeing him this winter. — Adieu, dear Sir, and believe me

Most cordially yours,

L. STERNE.

P. S. Mrs. S— is going to Chalons, but your letter will find her I believe at Avignon—she is very poorly—and my daughter writes to me with sad grief of heart that she is worse.

LETTER LXXII.

TO MR. S.

DEAR SIR,

Coxwold, July 23. 1766.

ONE might be led to think that there is a fatality regarding us—We make ap-

pointments to meet, and for these two years have not seen each other's face but twice—We must try and do better for the future—Having sought you with more zeal than C— —sought the Lord, in order to deliver you the books you bad me purchase for you at Paris—I was forced to pay carriage for them from London down to York—but as I shall neither charge you the books nor the carriage—'tis not worth talking about.—Never man, my dear Sir, has had a more agreeable tour than your Yorick—and at present I am in my peaceful retreat, writing the ninth volume of Tristram—I shall publish but one this year, and the next I shall begin a new work of four volumes, which when finished, I shall continue Tristram with fresh spirit.—What a difference of scene here! But with a disposition to be happy, 'tis neither this place nor t'other that renders us the reverse.—In short, each man's happiness depends upon himself—he is a fool if he does not enjoy it.

What are you about, dear S— —? Give me some account of your pleasures—You had better come to me for a fortnight, and

I will shew or give you (if needful) a practical dose of my philosophy; but I hope you do not want it—if you did, 'twould be the office of a friend to give it—Will not even our races tempt you? You see I use all arguments—Believe me yours most truly,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LXXIII.

TO MR. P. AT PARIS.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Coxwold, Sep. 21, 1766.

IF Mrs. S—should draw upon you for fifty louis d'ors, be so kind as to remit her the money—and pray be so good as not do draw upon Mr. Becket for it (as he owes me nothing), but favour me with the draught, which I will pay to Mr. Selwin.—A young nobleman is now negotiating a jaunt with me for six weeks, about Christmas, to the Fauxbourg de St. Germain—I should like much to be with you for so long—and if my wife should grow worse (having had a very poor ac-

count of her in my daughter's last) I cannot think of her being without me—and however expensive the journey would be, I would fly to Avignon to administer consolation to both her and my poor girl—Wherever I am, believe me,

Dear Sir, yours,

L. STERNE.

My kind compliments to Mr. F— —: though I have not the honour of knowing his name, I see no reason why I may not present all due respects to the better half of so old a friend, which I do by these presents—with my friendliest wishes to Miss P—.

L E T T E R LXXIV.

TO MR. F. AT PARIS.

MY DEAR F—,

Coxwold, Oct. 25, 1766.

I DESIRED you would be so good as to remit to Mrs. S— fifty louis, a month ago—I dare say you have done it—but her illness must have cost her a good deal—therefore having paid the last fifty

pounds into Mr. Selwin's hands, I beg you to send her thirty guineas more—for which I send a bank bill to Mr. Becket by this post—But surely had I not done so, you would not stick at it—for be assured, my dear F. that the First Lord of the Treasury is neither more able or more willing (nor perhaps half so punctual) in repaying with honour all I ever can be in your books. — My daughter says her mother is very ill—and I fear going fast down, by all accounts—'tis melancholy in her situation to want any aid that is in my power to give — Do write to her — and believe me, with all compliments to your Hotel,

Yours very truly,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LXXV.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR,

York, Nov. 25, 1766.

I JUST received yours — and am glad that the balance of accounts is now paid to you — Thus far all goes well — I have

received a letter from my daughter with the pleasing tidings that she thinks her mother out of danger—and that the air of the country is delightful (excepting the winds): but the description of the Chateau my wife has hired is really pretty—on the side of the Fountain of Vaucluse—with seven rooms on a floor, half furnished with tapestry, half with blue taffety, the permission to fish, and to have game; so many partridges a week, etc. and the price—guess!—sixteen guineas a year—there's for you, P.—About the latter end of next month my wife will have occasion for a hundred guineas—and pray be so good, my dear Sir, as to give orders that she may not be disappointed—she is going to spend the Carnival at Marseilles at Christmas—I shall be in London by Christmas week, and then shall balance this remittance to Mrs. S. with Mr. S—I am going to lie in of another child of the Shandaick procreation, in town—I hope you wish me a safe delivery—I fear my friend Mr. F. will have left town before I get there.—Adieu, dear Sir—I wish you every thing in this world which

will do you good, for I am with unfeigned truth

Yours,

L. STERNE.

Make my compliments acceptable to the good and worthy Baron d'Holbach—Miss P. etc. etc.

L E T T E R LXXVI.

TO MR. P. AT PARIS.

DEAR P.

London, Feb. 13, 1767.

I PAID yesterday (by Mr. Becket) a hundred guineas or pounds, I forget which, to Mr. Selwin—but you must remit to Mrs. S. at Marseilles a hundred louis before she leaves that place, which will be in less than three weeks. Have you got the ninth volume of Shandy?—'Tis liked the best of all here. I am going to publish a Sentimental Journey through France and Italy—The undertaking is protected and highly encouraged by all our noblesse—'tis subscribed for at a great rate—'twill be an original—in large quarto—the subscrip-

tion half a guinea—If you can procure me the honour of a few names of men of science, or fashion, I shall thank you—They will appear in good company, as all the nobility here almost have honoured me with their names. My kindest remembrance to Mr. F.— respects to Baron D'Holbach, and believe me ever ever yours,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LXXVII.

TO MISS S.

Old Bond-street, Feb. 23, 1767.

AND so, my Lydia, thy mother and thyself are returning back again from Marseilles to the banks of the Sorgue—and there thou wilt sit and fish for trouts—I envy you the sweet situation.——Petrarch's tomb I should like to pay a sentimental visit to—the Fountain of Vaucluse, by the description, must be delightful—I am also much pleased with the account you give me of the Abbé de Sade—you find great comfort in such a neighbour—I am glad

he is so good as to correct thy translation of my Sermons — dear girl, go on, and make me a present of thy work — But why not the House of Mourning? 'tis one of the best. — I long to receive the life of Petrarch and his Laura by your Abbé — but I am out of all patience with the answer the Marquis made the Abbé — 'twas truly coarse, and I wonder he bore it with any christian patience. — But to the subject of your letter — I do not wish to know who was the busy fool who made your mother uneasy about Mrs. — — —. — 'Tis true I have a friendship for her, but not to infatuation — I believe I have judgment enough to discern her's and every woman's faults. I honour thy mother for her answer — „that she wished not to be informed, and begged him to drop the subject.” — Why do you say that your mother wants money? — Whilst I have a shilling, shall you not both have ninepence out of it? — I think, if I have my enjoyments, I ought not to grudge you yours. — I shall not begin my Sentimental Journey till I get to Coxwoud — I have laid a plan for something new, quite out of the beaten track.

—I wish I had you with me—and I would introduce you to one of the most amiable and gentlest of beings, whom I have just been with—not Mrs. — — —, but a Mrs. J. the wife of as worthy a man as ever I met with.—I esteem them both. He possesses every manly virtue—honour and bravery are his characteristics, which have distinguished him nobly in several instances—I shall make you better acquainted with his character, by sending Orme's History, with the books you desired—and it is well worth your reading; for Orme is an elegant writer, and a just one; he pays no man a compliment at the expence of truth.—Mrs. J— —is kind—and friendly—of a sentimental turn of mind—and so sweet a disposition, that she is too good for the world she lives in—Just God! if all were like her, what a life would this be!—Heaven, my Lydia, for some wise purpose has created different beings—I wish my dear child knew her—thou art worthy of her friendship, and she already loves thee; for I sometimes tell her what I feel for thee.—This is a long letter—Write soon, and never let your letters be stu-

died ones—write naturally, and then you will write well.—I hope your mother has got quite well of her ague—I have sent her some of Huxham's tincture of the Bark.—I will order you a guittar since the other is broke. Believe me, my Lydia, that I am yours affectionately,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LXXVIII.

TO MR. P. AT PARIS.

DEAR SIR,

London, Feb. 27, 1767.

MY daughter begs a present of me, and you must know I can deny her nothing—It must be strung with cat-gut, and of five chords—*si chiama in Italiano la chitera di cinque corde*—she cannot get such a thing at Marseilles—at Paris one may have every thing—Will you be so good to my girl as to make her happy in this affair, by getting some musical body to buy one, and send it her to Avignon directed to Monsieur Teste?—I wrote last week to desire you would remit Mrs. S. a

hundred louis—'twill be all, except the guittar, I shall owe you—Send me your account, and I will pay Mr. Selwin—Direct to me at Mr. Becket's—All kind respects to my friend Mr. F. and your sister.

Yours cordially,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LXXIX.

TO D. G. ESQ.

DEAR SIR,

Thursday, Eleven o'Clock—Night.

TWAS for all the world like a cut across my finger with a sharp pen-knife.—I saw the blood—gave it a suck—wrapt it up—and thought no more about it.

But there is more goes to the healing of a wound than this comes to:—a wound (unless 'tis a wound not worth talking of, but by the bye mine is) must give you some pain after.—Nature will take her own way with it—it must ferment—it must digest.

The story you told me of Triftram's pretended tutor, this morning—My letter

by right should have set out with this sentence, and then the simile would not have kept you a moment in suspense.

This vile story, I say—tho' I then saw both how and where it wounded—I felt little from it at first—or, to speak more honestly (tho' it ruins my simile) I felt a great deal of pain from it, but affected an air usual on such accidents, of less feeling than I had.

I have now got home to my lodgings since the play (you astonished me in it) and have been unwrapping this self-same wound of mine, and shaking my head over it this half hour.

What the devil!—is there no one learned blockhead throughout the many schools of misapplied science in the Christian World to make a *tutor* of for my Tristram?—*Ex quovis ligno non fit*.—Are we so run out of stock, that there is no one lumber-headed, muddle-headed, mortar-headed, pudding-headed *chap* amongst our doctors?—Is there no one single wight of much reading and no learning amongst the many children in my *mother's* nursery, who bid high for this charge—but I must disable

my judgment by chusing a W — — n? Vengeance! have I so little concern for the honour of my hero!—Am I a wretch so void of sense, so bereft of feeling for the figure he is to make in story, that I should chuse a preceptor to rob him of all the immortality I intended him? O! dear Mr. G.

Malice is ingenious—unless where the excess of it outwits itself—I have two comforts in this stroke of it;—the first is, that this one is partly of this kind; and secondly, that it is one of the number of those which so unfairly brought poor Yorick to his grave. The report might draw blood of the author of *Tristram Shandy*—but could not harm such a man as the author of the *Divine Legation*—God bless him! tho' (by the bye, and according to the natural course of descents) the blessing should come from him to me.

Pray have you no interest, lateral or collateral, to get me introduced to his Lordship?

Why do you ask?

My dear Sir, I have no claim to such an honour, but what arises from the ho-

nour and respect which in the progress of my work will be shewn the world I owe to so great a man.

Whilst I am talking of owing—I wish, my dear Sir, that any body would tell you, how much I am indebted to you.—I am determined never to do it myself, or say more upon the subject than this, that I am yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LXXX.

TO MISS S.

Bond Street, April 9, 1767.

THIS letter, my dear Lydia, will distress thy good heart, for from the beginning thou wilt perceive no entertaining strokes of humour in it—I cannot be chearful when a thousand melancholy ideas surround me—I have met with a loss of near fifty pounds, which I was taken in for in an extraordinary manner—but what is that loss in comparison of one I may experience?—Friendship is the balm and cordial of life, and without it, 'tis a

heavy load not worth sustaining.—I am unhappy—thy mother and thyself at a distance from me, and what can compensate for such a destitution?—For God's sake persuade her to come and fix in England, for life is too short to waste in separation—and whilst she lives in one country, and I in another, many people will suppose it proceeds from choice—besides, I want thee near me, thou child and darling of my heart!—I am in a melancholy mood, and my Lydia's eyes will smart with weeping when I tell her the cause that now affects me.—I am apprehensive the dear friend I mentioned in my last letter is going into a decline—I was with her two days ago, and I never beheld a being so altered—she has a tender frame, and looks like a drooping lilly, for the roses are fled from her cheeks—I can never see or talk to this incomparable woman without bursting into tears—I have a thousand obligations to her, and I owe her more than her whole sex, if not all the world put together.—She has a delicacy in her way of thinking that few possess—our conversations are of the most interesting

some *batons pour les dents*—there are none good here.

L E T T E R LXXXI.

TO MR. AND MRS. J.

Old Bond-street, April 21, 1767.

I AM sincerely affected, my dear Mr. and Mrs. J. by your friendly inquiry, and the interest you are so good to take in my health. God knows I am not able to give a good account of myself, having passed a bad night in much feverish agitation.—My physician ordered me to bed, and to keep therein 'till some favourable change—I fell ill the moment I got to my lodgings—He says it is owing to my taking James's Powder, and venturing out on so cold a day as Sunday—but he is mistaken, for I am certain whatever bears that name must have efficacy with me—I was bled yesterday, and again to-day, and have been almost dead; but this friendly inquiry from Gerrard-street has poured balm into what blood I have left—I hope still, and (next to the sense of what I owe my

friends) it shall be the last pleasurable sensation I will part with — If I continue mending, it will yet be some time before I shall have strength enough to get out in a carriage—My first visit will be a of true gratitude—I leave my kind friends to guess where—A thousand blessings go along with this, and may heaven preserve you both —Adieu, my dear Sir, and dear Lady.

I am your ever obliged,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LXXXII.

TO THE EARL OF S — —

MY LORD,

Old Bond-street, May 1, 1767.

I WAS yesterday taking leave of all the town, with an intention of leaving it this day; but I am detained by the kindness of Lord and Lady S — —, who have made a party to dine and sup on my account—I am impatient to set out for my solitude, for there the mind gains strength, and learns to lean upon herself. — In the world it seeks or accepts of a few treache-

rous supports—the feigned compassion of one—the flattery of a second—the civilities of a third—the friendship of a fourth—they all deceive, and bring the mind back to where mine is retreating, to retirement, reflection, and books. My departure is fixed for to-morrow morning, but I could not think of quitting a place where I have received such numberless and unmerited civilities from your lordship, without returning my most grateful thanks, as well as my hearty acknowledgments for your friendly inquiry from Bath. Illness, my Lord, has occasioned my silence—Death knocked at my door, but I would not admit him—The call was both unexpected and unpleasant—and I am seriously worn down to a shadow—and still very weak.—But weak as I am, have as whimsical a story to tell you as ever befel one of my family—Shandy's nose, his name, his sash-window are fools to it—it will serve at least to amuse you.—The injury I did myself last month in catching cold upon James's Powder fell, you must know, upon the worst part it could—the most painful and most dangerous of any in the human

body. It was on this crisis I called in an able surgeon, and with him an able physician (both my friends,) to inspect my disaster. — 'Tis a venereal case, cried my two scientific friends. — 'Tis impossible, however, to be that, replied I—for I have had no commerce whatever with the sex, not even with my wife, added I, these fifteen years. — You are, however, my good friend, said the surgeon, or there is no such case in the world — — What the devil, said I, without knowing woman? — We will not reason about it, said the physician, but you must undergo a course of mercury. — I will lose my life first, said I—and trust to nature, to time, or at the worst to death.—So I put an end, with some indignation, to the conference—and determined to bear all the torments I underwent, and ten times more, rather than submit to be treated like a *sinner*, in a point where I had acted like a *saint*. Now as the father of mischief would have it, who has no pleasure like that of dishonouring the righteous, it so fell out that from the moment I dismissed my doctors, my pains began to rage with a violence not

to be exprest, or supported. Every hour became more intolerable.—I was got to bed, cried out, and raved the whole night, and was got up so near dead, that my friends insisted upon my sending again for my physician and surgeon. I told them upon the word of a man of honour they were both mistaken, as to my case—but though they had reasoned wrong, they might act right; but that sharp as my sufferings were, I felt them not so sharp as the imputation which a venereal treatment of my case laid me under.—They answered, that these taints of the blood laid dormant twenty years, but they would not reason with me in a point wherein I was so delicate, but would do all the office for which they were called in, namely, to put an end to my torments, which otherwise would put an end to me—And so have I been compelled to surrender myself—and thus, my dear Lord, has your poor friend with all his sensibilities been suffering the chastisement of the grossest sensualist.—Was it not as ridiculous an embarrassment as ever Yorick's spirit was involved in?—Nothing but the

purest conscience of innocence could have tempted me to write this story to my wife, which by the bye would make no bad anecdote in Tristram Shandy's Life—I have mentioned it in my journal to Mrs. ——. In some respects there is no difference between my wife and herself—when they fare alike, neither can reasonably complain.—I have just received letters from France, with some hints that Mrs. Sterne and my Lydia are coming to England, to pay me a visit—If your time is not better employed, Yorick flatters himself he shall receive a letter from your Lordship.—*En attendant*, I am with the greatest regard, my Lord,

Your Lordship's
most faithful humble servant,
L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LXXXIII.

TO J. D—N, ESQ.

Old Bond-street, Friday Morning.

I WAS going, my dear D—n, to bed before I received your kind inquiry, and

now my chaise stands at my door to take and convey this poor body to its legal settlement.—I am ill, very ill—I languish most affectingly—I am sick both in soul and body—It is a cordial to me to hear it is different with you—no man interests himself more in your happiness, and I am glad you are in so fair a road to it—Enjoy it long, my D. whilst I—no matter what—But my feelings are too nice for the world I live in—things will mend.—I dined yesterday with Lord and Lady S—. We talked much of you, and your goings on, for every one knows why Sunbury Hill is so pleasant a situation.—You rogue! you have locked up my boots—and I go bootless home—and fear I shall go bootless all my life—Adieu, gentlest and best of souls—adieu.

I am yours most affectionately,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LXXXIV.

TO J. H. S. ESQ.

MY DEAR COUSIN,

Newark, Monday, ten o'clock in the morn.

I HAVE got conveyed thus far like a bale of cadaverous goods consigned to Pluto and company—lying in the bottom of my chaise most of the route, upon a large pillow which I had the *prévoyance* to purchase before I set out—I am worn out—but press on to Barnby Moor to-night, and if possible to York the next.—I know not what is the matter with me—but some *dérangement* presses hard upon this machine—still I think it will not be overset this bout.—My love to G.—We shall all meet from the east, and from the south, and (as at the last) be happy together—My kind respects to a few.—I am, dear H.

Truly yours,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LXXXV.

FROM IGNATIUS SANCHE TO MR.
STERNE.

REVEREND SIR,

IT would be an insult on your humanity (or perhaps look like it) to apologize for the liberty I am taking.—I am one of those people whom the vulgar and illiberal call negroes — The first part of my life was rather unlucky, as I was placed in a family who judged ignorance the best and only security for obedience.—A little reading and writing I got by unwearied application. — The latter part of my life has been, thro' God's blessing, truly fortunate — having spent it in the service of one of the best and greatest families in the kingdom. — My chief pleasure has been books — Philanthropy I adore — How very much, good Sir, am I (amongst millions) indebted to you for the character of your amiable Uncle Toby! — I declare I would walk ten miles in the dog-days to shake hands with the honest Corporal. — Your Sermons have touched me to the heart,

and I hope have amended it, which brings me to the point.—In your tenth discourse, page seventy-eight, in the second volume, is this very affecting passage—,, Consider how great a part of our species—in all ages down to this—have been trod under the feet of cruel and capricious tyrants, who would neither hear their cries, nor pity their distresses.—Consider slavery—what it is—how bitter a draught—and how many millions are made to drink of it.”—Of all my favourite authors, not one has drawn a tear in favour of my miserable black brethren—excepting yourself, and the humane author of Sir Geo. Ellison.—I think you will forgive me; I am sure you will applaud me for beseeching you to give one half hour's attention to slavery, as it is at this day practised in our West-Indies.—That subject handled in your striking manner would ease the yoke (perhaps) of many—but if only of one—gracious God! what a feast to a benevolent heart! And sure I am, you are an epicurean in acts of charity.—You who are universally read, and as universally admired—you could not fail.

—Dear Sir, think in me you behold the uplifted hands of thousands of my brother Moors. Grief (you pathetically observe) is eloquent: figure to yourself their attitudes; learn their supplicating addresses! —Alas! you cannot refuse. — Humanity must comply—in which hope I beg permission to subscribe myself,

Reverend Sir, etc.

I. S.

L E T T E R LXXXVI.

FROM MR. STERNE TO IGNATIUS SANCHO.

Coxwold, July 27, 1767.

THERE is a strange coincidence, Sancho, in the little events (as well as in the great ones) of this world: for I had been writing a tender tale of the sorrows of a friendless poor negro-girl, and my eyes had scarce done smarting with it, when your letter of recommendation, in behalf of so many of her brethren and sisters, came to me—But why *her brethren*? or yours, Sancho! any more than mine? It is by the finest tints, and most insensible grada-

tions, that nature descends from the fairest face about St. James's to the sootiest complexion in Africa: — — at which tint of these is it that the ties of blood are to cease? and how many shades must we descend lower still in the scale, ere mercy is to vanish with them? But 'tis no uncommon thing, my good Sancho, for one half of the world to use the other half of it like brutes, and then endeavour to make 'em so. — — For my own part, I never look *westward*, (when I am in a pensive mood at least) but I think of the burdens which our brothers and sisters are *there* carrying; and could I ease their ~~shoulders from one ounce~~ of them, I declare I would set out this hour upon a pilgrimage to Mecca for their sakes — which by the bye, Sancho, exceeds your walk of ten miles in about the same proportion that a visit of humanity should one of mere form. — However, if you meant my Uncle Toby more, he is your debtor. — If I can weave the tale I have wrote into the work I am about — 'tis at the service of the afflicted — and a much greater matter; for, in serious truth, it cuts a sad

shade upon the world, that so great a part of it are and have been so long bound in chains of darkness and in chains of misery; and I cannot but both respect and felicitate you, that by so much laudable diligence you have broke the one—and that by falling into the hands of so good and merciful a family, Providence has rescued you from the other.

And so, good-hearted Sancho, adieu! and believe me I will not forget your letter,

Yours,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LXXXVII.

TO IGNATIUS SANCHO.

Bond-street, Saturday.

I WAS very sorry, my good Sancho, that I was not at home to return my compliments by you for the great courtesy of the Duke of M—g—'s family to me, in honouring my list of subscribers with their names—for which I bear them all thanks.—But you have something to add, Sancho,

to what I owe your good-will also on this account, and that is to send me the subscription money, which I find a necessity of dunning my best friends for before I leave town—to avoid the perplexities of both keeping pecuniary accounts (for which I have very slender talents) and collecting them (for which I have neither strength of body or mind). And so, good Sancho, dun the Duke of M. the Dukes of M. and Lord M. for their subscriptions, and lay the sin, and money with it too, at my door—I wish so good a family every blessing they merit, along with my humblest compliments. You know, Sancho, that I am your friend and well-wisher,

L. STERNE.

P. S. I leave town on Friday morning—and should on Thursday, but that I stay to dine with Lord and Lady S—.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

TO IGNATIUS SANCHO.

Coxwold, June 30.

I MUST acknowledge the courtesy of my good friend Sancho's letter, were I ten

times buſier than I am, and muſt thank him too for the many expreſſions of his good will and good opinion—'Tis all affectation to ſay a man is not gratified with being praiſed—we only want it to be ſincere—and then it will be taken, Sancho, as kindly as yours. I left town very poorly—and with an idea I was taking leave of it for ever—but good air, a quiet retreat, and quiet reflections along with it, with an aſs to milk, and another to ride out upon (if I chuſe it,) all together do wonders.—I ſhall live this year at leaſt, I hope, be it but to give the world, before I quit it, as good impreſſions of me as you have, Sancho. I would only covenant for juſt ſo much health and ſpirits as are ſufficient to carry my pen through the taſk I have ſet it this ſummer.—But I am a reſigned being, Sancho, and take health and ſickneſs as I do light and darkneſs, or the viciffitudes of ſeaſons—that is, juſt as it pleaſes God to ſend them—and accommodate myſelf to their periodical returns as well as I can—only taking care, whatever befalls me in this ſilly world, not to loſe my temper at it.—This I be-

lieve, friend Sancho, to be the truest philosophy—for this we must be indebted to ourselves, but not to our fortunes.—Farewell—I hope you will not forget your custom of giving me a call at my lodgings next winter—in the mean time I am very cordially,

My honest friend Sancho,

Yours,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R LXXXIX.

TO MRS. H.

Coxwold, Oct. 12, 1767.

EVER since my dear H. wrote me word she was mine more than ever woman was, I have been racking my memory to inform me where it was that you and I had that affair together.—People think that I have had many, some in body, some in mind, but as I told you before, you have had me more than any woman—therefore you must have had me, H—, both in mind and in body.—Now I cannot recollect where it was, nor exactly when—it

could not be the lady in Bond-street, or Grosvenor-street, or — — — square, or Pall-mall. — We shall make it out, H. when we meet—I impatiently long for it — 'Tis no matter—I cannot now stand writing to you to-day—I will make it up next post—for dinner is upon table, and if I make Lord F— — stay, he will not frank this. — How do you do? — Which parts of Tristram do you like best? — God bless you.

Yours,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R X C.

TO MRS. H.

Coxwold, Nov. 15, 1767.

NOW be a good dear woman, my H— —, and execute these commissions well—and when I see you I will give you a kiss — There's for you! — But I have something else for you which I am fabricating at a great rate, and that is my Sentimental Journey, which shall make you cry as much as it has affected me—or

I will give up the business of sentimental writing—and write to the body—that is, H. what I am doing in writing to you—but you are a *good body*, which is worth half a score mean souls.—

I am yours, etc. etc.

L. SHANDY.

L E T T E R XCI.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY SIR G. M.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Coxwold, Dec. 3, 1767.

FOR tho' you are his Excellency, and I still but parson Yorick—I still must call you so—and were you to be next Emperor of Russia, I could not write to you, or speak of you, under any other relation—I felicitate you, I don't say how much, because I can't—I always had something like a kind of revelation within me, which pointed out this track for you, in which you are so happily advanced—It was not only my wishes for you, which were ever ardent enough to impose upon a visionary brain, but I thought I actual-

ly saw you just where you now are—and that is just, my dear Macartney, where you should be.—I should long, long ago have acknowledged the kindness of a letter of yours from Peterburgh; but hearing daily accounts you was leaving it—this is the first time I knew well *where* my thanks would find you:—how they will find you, I know well—that is—the same I ever knew you. In three weeks I shall kiss your hand—and sooner, if I can finish my Sentimental Journey.—The deuce take all sentiments! I wish there was not one in the world!—My wife is come to pay me a sentimental visit as far as from Avignon—and the *politesse* arising from such a proof of her urbanity, has robbed me of a month's writing, or I had been in town now.—I am going to lie-in, being at Christmas at my full reckoning—and unless what I shall bring forth is not *pressed* to death by these devils of printers, I shall have the honour of presenting to you a *couple of as clean brats* as ever chaste brain conceived—they are frolicksome too; *mais cela n'empêche pas*—I put your name down with many wrong and

right *honourables*, knowing you would take it not well if I did not make myself happy with it.

Adieu, my dear friend!

Believe me yours, etc.

L. STERNE.

P. S. If you see Mr. Crawford, tell him I greet him kindly.

LETTER XCII.

TO J. H. S. ESQ.

LITERAS vestras lepidissimas, mi consobrine, consobrinis meis omnibus carior, accepi die Veneris; sed postea non rediebat versus aquilonem eo die, aliter scripsissem prout desiderabas: nescio quid est materia cum me, sed sum fatigatus et aegrotus de meâ uxore plus quam unquam—et sum possessus cum diabolo, qui pellet me in urbem—et tu es possessus cum eodem malo spiritu, qui te tenet in deserto esse tentatum ancillis tuis, et perturbatum uxore tuâ—Crede mihi, mi Antoni, quod ista haec non est via ad salutem sive hodiernam, sive aeternam; num tu incipis cogi-

tare de pecuniâ, quae, ut ait Sanctus Paulus, est radix omnium malorum, et non satis dicis in corde tuo, Ego Antonius de Castello Infirmo sum jam quadraginta et plus annos natus, explevi octavum meum lustrum, et tempus est me curare, et meipsum Antonium facere hominem felicem, et liberum, et mihimet ipsi benefacere, ut exhortatur Solomon, qui dicit quod nihil est melius in hac vitâ quàm quòd homo vivat festivè, et quòd edat et bibat, et bono fruatur, quia hoc est sua portio et dos in hoc mundo.

Nunc te scire vellemus, quòd non debeo esse reprehendi pro festinando eundo ad Londinum, quia Deus est testis, quòd non propero prae gloriâ et pro me ostendere; nam diabolus iste qui me intravit, non est diabolus vanus, et consobrinus suus Lucifer—sed est diabolus amabundus, qui non vult sinere me esse solum; nam cum non cumbendo cum uxore meâ sum mentulatiores quam par est—et sum mortaliter in amore—et sum fatuus; ergo tu me, mi care Antoni, excusabis, quoniam tu fuisti in amore, et per mare et per terras ivisti et festinasti sicut diabolus, eodem te pro-

pellente diabolo. Habeo multa ad te scribere—sed scribo hanc epistolam in domo coffeatoriâ et plenâ sociorum strepitosorum, qui non permittent me cogitare unam cogitationem.

Saluta amicum Panty meum, cujus literis respondebo—Saluta amicos in domo Gifbrosensi, et oro, credas me vinculo consobrinitatis et amoris ad te, mi Antoni, devinctissimum,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XCIII.

TO A. L—E, ESQ.

DEAR L—E,

Coxwold, June 7, 1767.

I HAD not been many days at this peaceful cottage before your letter greeted me with the seal of friendship, and most cordially do I thank you for so kind a proof of your good will.—I was truly anxious to hear of the recovery of my sentimental friend but I would not write to inquire after her, unless I could have sent her the testimony without the tax, for even

how-d'yes to invalids, or those that have lately been so, either call to mind what is past or what may return—at least I find it so.—I am as happy as a prince, at Cox-would—and I wish you could see in how princely a manner I live—'tis a land of plenty. I sit down alone to venison, fish and wild fowl, or a couple of fowls or ducks, with curds, and strawberries, and cream, and all the simple plenty which a rich valley under (Hamilton Hills) can produce—with a clean cloth on my table—and a bottle of wine on my right hand to drink your health. I have a hundred hens and chickens about my yard—and not a parishioner catches a hare, or a rabbit, or a trout, but he brings it as an offering to me. If solitude would cure a love-sick heart, I would give you an invitation, but absence and time lessen no attachment which virtue inspires.—I am in high spirits—care never enters this cottage—I take the air every day in my post-chaise, with my two long-tailed horses—they turn out good ones; and as to myself, I think I am better upon the whole for the medicines and regimen I submitted to in town

—May you, dear L—, want neither the one, nor the other.

Yours truly,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XCIV.

TO THE SAME.

Coxwold, June 30, 1767.

I AM in still better health, my dear L—e, than when I wrote last to you—owing I believe to my riding out every day with my friend H—, whose castle lies near the sea—and there is a beach as even as a mirrour, of five miles in length before it—where we daily run races in our chaises, with one wheel in the sea, and the other on the land.—D—has obtained his fair Indian, and has this post sent a letter of inquiries after Yorick and his Bramine. He is a good soul, and interests himself much in our fate.—I cannot forgive you, L—e, for your folly in saying you intend to get introduced to the—. I despise them, and I shall hold your understanding much cheaper than I

now do, if you persist in a resolution so unworthy of you.—I suppose Mrs. J——telling you they were sensible, is the ground-work you go upon.—By—, they are not clever; tho' what is commonly called wit, may pass for literature on the other side of Temple-bar.—You say Mrs. J——thinks them amiable—she judges too favourably; but I have put a stop to her intentions of visiting them.—They are bitter enemies of mine, and I am even with them. La Bramine assured me they used their endeavours with her to break off her friendship with me, for reasons I will not write, but tell you.—I said enough of them before she left England, and tho' she yielded to me in every other point, yet in this she obstinately persisted.—Strange infatuation!—but I think I have effected my purpose by a falsity, which Yorick's friendship to the Bramine can only justify.—I wrote her word, that the most amiable of women reiterated my request that she would not write to them. I said too, she had concealed many things for the sake of her peace of mind—when in fact, L——e, this was merely a child

of my own brain, made Mrs. J—'s by adoption, to enforce the argument I had before urged so strongly.—Do not mention this circumstance to Mrs. J—'twould displease her—and I had no design in it but for the Bramine to be a friend to herself.—I ought now to be busy from sun-rise to sun-set, for I have a book to write—a wife to receive—an estate to sell—a parish to superintend, and what is worst of all, a disquieted heart to reason with—these are continual calls upon me.—I have received half a dozen letters to press me to join my friends at Scarborough, but I am at present deaf to them all.—I perhaps may pass a few days there something later in the season, not at present—and so dear L—e, adieu.

I am most cordially yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XCV.

TO MR. AND MRS. J.

Coxwold, July 6, 1767.

IT is with as much true gratitude as ever heart felt, that I sit down to thank my

dear friends Mr. and Mrs. J—for the continuation of their attention to me; but for this last instance of their humanity and politeness to me, I must ever be their debtor—I never can thank you enough, my dear friends, and yet I thank you from my soul.—And for the single day's happiness your goodness would have sent me, I wish I could send you back thousands—I cannot, but they will come of themselves—and so God bless you.—I have had twenty times my pen in my hand since I came down to write one letter to you both in Gerrard-street—but I am a shy kind of a soul at the bottom, and have a jealousy about troubling my friends, especially about myself.—I am now got perfectly well, but was a month after my arrival in the country in but a poor state—My body has got the start, and is at present more at ease than my mind—but this world is a school of trials, and so heaven's will be done!—I hope you have both enjoyed all that I wanted—and to compleat your joy, that your little lady flourishes like a vine at your table, to which I hope to see her preferred by next

winter.—I am now beginning to be truly busy at my Sentimental Journey—the pains and sorrows of this life having retarded its progress—but I shall make up my leeway, and overtake every body in a very short time.—

What can I send you that Yorkshire produces? Tell me—I want to be of use to you, for I am, my dear friends, with the truest value and esteem,

Your ever obliged,

L. STERNE.

LETTER XCVI.

TO MR. P. AT PARIS.

MY DEAR P.

York, July 20, 1767.

BE so kind as to forward what letters are arrived for Mrs. S. at your office by to-day's post, or the next, and she will receive them before she quits Avignon for England.—She wants to lay out a little money in an annuity for her daughter—advise her to get her own life insured in London, lest my Lydia should die before

her.—If there are any packets, send them with the ninth volume of Shandy, which she has failed of getting.—She says she has drawn for fifty louis—when she leaves Paris, send by her my account.—Have you got me any French subscription or subscriptions in France?—Present my kindest service to Miss P. I know her politeness and good-nature will incline her to give Mrs. S. her advice about what she may venture to bring over.—I hope every thing goes on well, though never half so well as I wish.—God prosper you, my dear friend!—Believe me most warmly,

Yours,

L. STERNE.

The sooner you send me the gold snuff-box, the better—'tis a present from my best friend.

LETTER XCVII.

TO MR. AND MRS. J.

Coxwold, Aug. 2, 1767.

MY dear friends Mr. and Mrs. J—are infinitely kind to me in sending now and

Sterne's Letters.

T

then a letter to inquire after me—and to acquaint me how they are.—You cannot conceive, my dear lady, how truly I bear a part in your illness.—I wish Mr. J— would carry you to the south of France in pursuit of health—But why need I wish it, when I know his affection will make him do that and ten times as much to prevent a return of those symptoms which alarmed him so much in the spring?—Your politeness and humanity is always contriving to treat me agreeably, and what you promise next winter will be perfectly so—but you must get well—and your little dear girl must be of the party with her parents and friends to give it a relish—I am sure you shew no partiality but what is natural and praise-worthy in behalf of your daughter, but I wonder my friends will not find her a play-fellow, and I both hope and advise them not to venture along through this warfare of life without two strings at least to their bow.—I had letters from France by last night's post, by which (by some fatality) I find not one of my letters has reached Mrs. S— —. This gives me concern, as it wears the aspect of unkind.

ness, which she by no means merits from me.—My wife and dear girl are coming to pay me a visit for a few months; I wish I may prevail with them to tarry longer.—You must permit me, dear Mrs. J. to make my Lydia known to you, if I can prevail with my wife to come and spend a little time in London, as she returns to France.—I expect a small parcel—may I trouble you before you write next to send to my lodgings to ask if there is any thing directed to me that you can enclose under cover?—I have but one excuse for this freedom, which I am prompted to use from a persuasion that it is doing you pleasure to give you an opportunity of doing an obliging thing—and as to myself I rest satisfied, for 'tis only scoring up another debt of thanks to the millions I owe you both already.—Receive a thousand and a thousand thanks, yes, and with them ten thousand friendly wishes for all you wish in this world.—May my friend Mrs. J. continue blest with good health, and may his good lady get perfectly well, there being no woman's health or comfort I so ardently pray for.—Adieu,

my dear friends—believe me most truly
and faithfully yours,

L. STERNE.

P. S. In Eliza's last letter dated from
St. Jago she tells me, as she does you,
that she is extremely ill—God protect her.
—By this time surely she has set foot
upon dry land at Madras—I heartily wish
her well, and if Yorick was with her, he
would tell her so—but he is cut off from
this, by bodily absence—I am present
with her in spirit however—but what is
that, you will say?

L E T T E R XCVIII.

TO J. H—S. ESQ.

MY DEAR H.

Coxwold, Aug. 11, 1767.

I AM glad all has passed with so much
amity *inter te et filium Marcum tuum*,
and that Madame has found grace in thy
fight—All is well that ends well—and so
much for moralizing upon it. I wish you
could, or would, take up your parable,
and prophesy as much good concerning

me and my affairs.—Not one of my letters have got to Mrs. S—since the notification of her intentions, which has a pitiful air on my side, though I have wrote her six or seven.—I imagine she will be here the latter end of September, though I have no date for it but her impatience, which having suffered my supposed silence, I am persuaded will make her fear the worst.—If that is the case, she will fly to England—a most natural conclusion.—You did well to discontinue all commerce with James's Powder, as you are so well;—rejoice therefore, and let your heart be merry:—mine ought upon the same score—for I never have been so well since I left college—and should be a marvellous happy man, but for some reflections which bow down my spirits.—But if I live but even three or four years, I will acquit myself with honour—and—No matter! we will talk this over when we meet.——If all ends as temperately as with you, and that I find grace, etc. etc. I will come and sing *Te Deum*, or drink *poculum elevatum*, or do any thing with you in the world.—I should depend upon G—'s

critique upon my head, as much as Moliere's old woman upon his comedies.— When you do not want her society, let it be carried into your bed-chamber to flay her, or clap it upon her bum—to— and give her my blessing as you do it—

My postillion has set me a-ground for a week by one of my pistols bursting in his hand; which he taking for granted to be quite shot off, he instantly fell upon his knees and said, „Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy Name”—at which, like a good christian, he stopped, not remembering any more of it—The affair was not so bad as he at first thought, for it has only *bursten* two of his fingers (he says).—I long to return to you, but I sit here alone as solitary and sad as a tom cat, which by the bye is all the company I keep—He follows me from the parlour to the kitchen, into the garden, and every place—I wish I had a dog—my daughter will bring me one—and so God be about you, and strengthen your faith—I am affectionately, dear cousin, your's,

L. S.

My service to the C—, though they are from home, and to Panty.

L E T T E R XCIX.

TO MR. AND MRS. J—.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

Coxwold, Aug. 13, 1767.

I BUT copy your great civility to me in writing you word, that I have this moment received another letter wrote eighteen days after the date of the last from St. Jago—If our poor friend could have wrote another letter to England, you would in course have had it—but I fear, from the circumstance of great hurry and bodily disorder in which she was when she dispatched this, she might not have time.—In case it has so fallen out, I send you the contents of what I have received—and that is a melancholy history of herself and sufferings, since they left St. Jago—Continual and most violent rheumatism all the time—a fever brought on with fits, and attended with delirium, and every terrifying symptom—the recovery from this left her low and emaciated to a skeleton.—I give you the pain of this detail with

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a bleeding heart, knowing how much at the same time it will affect your's.—The three or four last days of her journal leave us with hopes she will do well at last, for she is more chearful—and seems to be getting into better spirits; and health will follow in course. They have crossed the Line—are much becalmed—from which with other delays she fears they will lose their passage to Madras—and be some months sooner for it at Bombay.—Heaven protect her, for she suffers much, and with uncommon fortitude.—She writes much to me about her dear friend Mrs. J——in her last packet.—In truth, my good lady, she loves and honours you from her heart; but if she did not, I should not esteem her, or wish her so well as I do.——Adieu, my dear friends—you have few in the world more truly and cordially

Yours than

L. STERNE.

P. S. I have just received, as a present from a man I shall ever love, a most elegant gold snuff-box, fabricated for me at Paris—'tis not the first pledge I have received of his friendship.—May I presume

to inclose you a letter of chit-chat which I shall write to Eliza? I know you will write yourself, and my letter may have the honour to *chaperon* your's to India—They will neither of them be the worse received for going together in company, but I fear they will get late in the year to their destined port, as they go first to Bengal.

L E T T E R C.

TO MISS S.

Coxwold, Aug. 24, 1767.

I AM truly surpris'd, my dear Lydia, that my last letter has not reached thy mother and thyself—it looks most unkind on my part, after your having wrote me word of your mother's intention of coming to England, that she has not received my letter to welcome you both—and though in that I said I wished you would defer your Journey till March, for before that time I should have published my sentimental work, and should be in town to receive you—yet I will shew you more real politesses than any you have met with

in France, as mine will come warm from the heart.—I am sorry you are not here at the races, but *les fêtes champêtres* of the Marquis de Sade have made you amends.—I know B——very well, and he is what in France would be called admirable—that would be but so so here.—You are right—he studies nature more than any, or rather most of the French comedians.—If the Empress of Russia pays him and his wife a pension of twenty thousand livres a year, I think he is very well off.—The folly of staying 'till after twelve for supper—that you two excommunicated beings might have meat—, his conscience would not let it be served before!”—Surely the Marquis thought you both, being English, could not be satisfied without it.—I would have given not my gown and callock (for I have but one) but my topaz ring to have seen the *petits maîtres et maîtresses* go to mass, after having spent the night in dancing.—As to my pleasures, they are few in compass.—My poor cat sits purring beside me—your lively French dog shall have his place on the other side of my fire—but if he is as devilish as

when I last saw him, I must tutor him, for I will not have my cat abused—in short, I will have nothing devilish about me—a combustion would spoil a sentimental thought.

Another thing I must desire—do not be alarmed—'tis to throw all your rouge pots into the Sorgue before you set out—I will have no rouge put on in England—and do not bewail them as— — — — — did her silver syringe or glyster equipage which she lost in a certain river—but take a wise resolution of doing without rouge.—I have been three days ago bad again—with a spitting of blood—and that unfeeling brute ***** came and drew my curtains, and with a voice like a trumpet halloo'd in my ear—„Z—ds, what a fine kettle of fish have you brought yourself to, Mr. S— —!“—In a faint voice I bid him leave me, for comfort sure was never administered in so rough a manner.—Tell your mother I hope she will purchase what either of you may want at Paris—'tis an occasion not to be lost—so write to me from Paris, that I may come and meet you in my post-chaise with my long-tail-

ed horses—and the moment you have both put your feet in it, call it hereafter your's. —Adieu, dear Lydia—believe me, that I ever shall be,

Your affectionate father,

L. STERNE.

I think I shall not write to Avignon any more, but you will find one for you at Paris—Once more adieu.

LETTER CI.

TO SIR W.

MY DEAR SIR,

September 19, 1767.

YOU are perhaps the drollest being in the universe—Why do you banter me so about what I wrote to you?—Tho' I told you, every morning I jumped into Venus's lap (meaning thereby the sea,) was you to infer from that, that I leaped into the ladies beds afterwards?—The body guides you—the mind me.—I have wrote the most whimsical letter to a lady that was ever read, and talked of body and soul too.—I said she had made me vain, by

saying she was mine more than ever woman was—but she is not the lady of Bond-street, nor—square, nor the lady who supped with me in Bond-street on scolopped oysters, and other such things—nor did she ever go *tête-à-tête* with me to Salt-Hill.—Enough of such nonsense—The past is over—and I can justify myself unto myself—can you do as much?—No faith!—„You can feel!”—Aye, so can my cat, when he hears a female caterwauling on the house-top.—But caterwauling disgusts me. I had rather raise a gentle flame, than have a different one raised in me.—Now I take heaven to witness, after all this *badinage* my heart is innocent—and the sporting of my pen is equal, just equal, to what I did in my boyish days, when I got astride of a stick, and galloped away.—The truth is this—that my pen governs me—not me my pen.—You are much to blame if you dig for marl, unless you are sure of it.—I was once such a puppy myself as to pare, and burn, and had my labour for my pains, and two hundred pounds out of pocket.—Curse on farming! (said I) I will try if the pen will not suc-

ceed better than the spade.—The following up of that affair (I mean farming) made me lose my temper, and a cart-load of turneps was (I thought) very dear at two hundred pounds.—

In all your operations may your own good sense guide you—bought experience is the devil.—Adieu, adieu!—Believe me

Your's most truly,

L. STERNE.

LETTER CII.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR,

Coxwold, Sept. 27, 1767.

YOU are arrived at Scarborough, when all the world has left it—but you are an unaccountable being, and so there is nothing more to be said on the matter.—You wish me to come to Scarborough, and join you to read a work that is not yet finished—besides, I have other things in my head.—My wife will be here in three or four days, and I must not be found straying in the wilderness—but I

have been there.—As for meeting you at Bluit's, with all my heart—I will laugh and drink my barley-water with you.—As soon as I have greeted my wife and daughter, and hired them a house at York, I shall go to London, where you generally are in spring—and then my Sentimental Journey will, I dare say, convince you that my feelings are from the heart, and that that heart is not of the worst of moulds.—Praised be God for my sensibility!—Though it has often made me wretched, yet I would not exchange it for all the pleasures the grossest sensualist ever felt.—Write to me the day you will be at York—'tis ten to one but I may introduce you to my wife and daughter. Believe me,

My good Sir, ever your's,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R CIII.

TO MR. P. AT PARIS.

DEAR SIR,

York, Oct. 1, 1767.

I HAVE ordered my friend Becket to advance for two months your account which my wife this day delivered—she is in raptures with all your civilities. — This is to give you notice to draw upon your correspondent — and Becket will deduct out of my publication. — To-morrow morning I repair with her to Coxwold, and my Lydia seems transported with the sight of me.—Nature, dear P — —, breathes in all her composition; and except a little vivacity—which is a fault in the world we live in—I am fully content with her mother's care of her.—Pardon this digression from business—but 'tis natural to speak of those we love. — As to the subscriptions which your friendship has procured me, I must have them to incorporate with my lists which are to be prefixed to the first volume. — My wife and daughter join in

millions of thanks—they will leave me the 1st of December.—Adieu, adieu—believe me

Your's most truly,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R C I V .

TO MR. AND MRS. J—

Coxwold, Oct. 3, 1767.

I HAVE suffered under a strong desire for above this fortnight to send a letter of inquiries after the health and the well-being of my dearest friends Mr. and Mrs. J—; and I do assure you both, 'twas merely owing to a little modesty in my temper not to make my good-will troublesome, where I have so much, and to those I never think of but with ideas of sensibility and obligation, that I have refrained.—Good God! to think I could be in town, and not go the first step I made to Gerard-street!—My mind and body must be at sad variance with each other, should it ever fall out that it is not both the first and last place also where I shall betake

myself, were it only to say, „God bless you.” — May you have every blessing he can send you! 'Tis a part of my Litany, where you will always have a place whilst I have a tongue to repeat it.—And so you heard I had left Scarborough, which you would no more credit than the reasons assigned for it!—I thank you for it kindly.—Tho' you have not told me what they were, being a shrewd divine, I think I can guess.—I was ten days at Scarborough in September, and was hospitably entertained by one of the best of our Bishops; who, as he kept house there, pressed me to be with him—and his household consisted of a gentleman and two ladies—which, with the good Bishop and myself, made so good a party that we kept much to ourselves.—I made in this time a connexion of great friendship with my mitred host, who would gladly have taken me with him back to Ireland.—However we all left Scarborough together, and lay fifteen miles off, where we kindly parted — Now it was supposed (and I have since heard) that I e'en went on with the party to London; and this I suppose

was the reason assigned for my being there. —I dare say charity would add a little to the account, and give out that 'twas on the score of one, and perhaps both of the ladies — and I will excuse charity on that head, for a heart disengaged could not well have done better.—I have been hard writing ever since—and hope by Christmas I shall be able to give a gentle rap at your door—and tell you how happy I am to see my two good friends. — I assure you I spur on my Pegasus more violently upon that account, and am now determined not to draw bit, till I have finished this Sentimental Journey—which I hope to lay at your feet, as a small (but a very honest) testimony of the constant truth with which I am,

My dear friends,

Your ever obliged

And grateful,

L. STERNE.

P. S. My wife and daughter arrived here last night from France.—My girl has returned an elegant accomplished little flut—My wife——but I hate to praise my wife — 'tis as much as decency will allow

to praise my daughter.—I suppose they will return next summer to France.—They leave me in a month to reside at York for the winter—and I stay at Coxwold till the first of January.

L E T T E R CV.

TO MRS. F.— —

DEAR MADAM,

Coxwold, Friday.

I RETURN you a thousand thanks for your obliging inquiry after me—I got down last summer very much worn out—and much worse at the end of my journey.—I was forced to call at his Grace's house (the Archbishop of York) to refresh myself a couple of days upon the road near Doncaster.—Since I got home to quietness, and temperance, and good books, and good hours, I have mended—and am now very stout—and in a fortnight's time shall perhaps be as well as you yourself could wish me.—I have the pleasure to acquaint you that my wife and daughter are arrived from France.—I shall be in

town to greet my friends by the first of January.—Adieu, dear Madam—believe me

Your's sincerely,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R CVI.

TO MR. AND MRS. J—.

Coxwold, Nov. 12, 1767.

FORGIVE me, dear Mrs. J—, if I am troublesome in writing something like a letter and a card to inquire after you and my good friend Mr. J—, whom 'tis an age since I have heard a syllable of.—I think so however, and never more felt the want of a house I esteem so much; as I do now when I can hear tidings of it so seldom—and have nothing to recompense my desire of seeing it's kind possessors, but the hopes before me of doing it by Christmas.—I long sadly to see you—and my friend Mr. J—. I am still at Coxwold—my wife and girl* here

* Mrs. Medalle thinks an apology may be necessary for publishing this letter—The best she can offer is—that it was written by a fond parent (whose commendations she is proud of) to a very sincere friend.

—She is a dear good creature—affectionate, and most elegant in body and mind—She is all heaven could give me in a daughter—but like other blessings, not given, but lent; for her mother loves France—and this dear part of me must be torn from my arms, to follow her mother, who seems inclined to establish her in France, where she has had many advantageous offers.—Do not smile at my weakness, when I say I don't wonder at it, for she is as accomplished a slut as France can produce.—You shall excuse all this—if you won't, I desire Mr. J——to be my advocate—but I know I don't want one—With what pleasure shall I embrace your dear little pledge—whom I hope to see every hour increasing in stature, and in favour both with God and man!—I kiss all your hands with a most devout and friendly heart.—No man can wish you more good than your meagre friend does—few so much, for I am with infinite cordiality, gratitude and honest affection,

My dear Mrs. J——,

Your ever faithful

L. STERNE.

P. S. My Sentimental Journey will please Mrs. J— —and my Lydia—I can answer for those two. It is a subject which works well, and suits the frame of mind I have been in for some time past—I told you my design in it was to teach us to love the world and our fellow-creatures better than we do—so it runs most upon those gentler passions and affections, which aid so much to it.—Adieu, and may you and my worthy friend Mr. J— —continue the examples of the doctrine I teach.

L E T T E R CVII.

TO A. L—E, ESQ.

Coxwold, Nov. 19, 1767.

YOU make yourself unhappy, dear L— —e, by imaginary ills—which you might shun, instead of putting yourself in the way of.—Would not any man in his senses fly from the object he adores, and not waste his time and his health in increasing his misery by so vain a pursuit?—The idol of your heart is one of ten thousand.—The Duke of— —has long sigh-

ed in vain—and can you suppose a woman will listen to you, that is proof against titles, stars, and red ribbands?—Her heart (believe me, L—e) will not be taken in by fine men, or fine speeches—if it should ever feel a preference, it will chuse an object for itself, and it must be a singular character that can make an impression on such a being—She has a Platonic way of thinking, and knows love only by name—The natural reserve of her character, which you complain of, proceeds not from pride, but from a superiority of understanding, which makes her despise every man that turns himself into a fool—Take my advice, and pay your addresses to Miss— —. She esteems you, and time will wear off an attachment which has taken so deep a root in your heart.—I pity you from my soul—but we are all born with passions, which ebb and flow (else they would play the devil with us) to different objects:—and the best advice I can give you, L— —e, is to turn the tide of yours another way.—I know not whether I shall write again while I stay at Coxwold.—I am in earnest at my

Sentimental work — and intend being in town soon after Christmas — in the mean time adieu.—Let me hear from you, and believe me, dear L.

Yours, etc.

L. STERNE.

LETTER CVIII.

TO THE EARL OF—.

MY LORD,

Coxwold, Nov. 28, 1767.

'TIS with the greatest pleasure I take my pen to thank your Lordship for your letter of inquiry about Yorick — He has worn out both his spirits and body with the Sentimental Journey—'Tis true that an author must feel himself, or his reader will not—but I have torn my whole frame into pieces by my feelings—I believe the brain stands as much in need of recruiting as the body—therefore I shall set out for town the twentieth of next month, after having recruited myself a week at York.

Sterne's Letters.

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—I might indeed solace myself with my wife, (who is come from France); but in fact I have long been a sentimental being—whatever your Lordship may think to the contrary.—The world has imagined, because I wrote *Tristram Shandy*, that I was myself more *Shandeyan* than I really ever was—'Tis a good-natured world we live in, and we are often painted in divers colours according to the ideas each one frames in his head—A very agreeable lady arrived three years ago at York, in her road to Scarborough—I had the honour of being acquainted with her, and was her *chaperon*—All the females were very inquisitive to know who she was—„Do not tell, ladies; 'tis a mistress my wife has recommended to me—nay moreover has sent her from France.”—

I hope my book will please you, my Lord, and then my labour will not be totally in vain. If it is not thought a chaste book, mercy on them that read it, for they must have warm imaginations indeed!—Can your Lordship forgive my not making this a longer epistle?—In short, I can

but add this, which you already know—
that I am with gratitude and friendship,

My Lord,

Your obedient faithful,

L. STERNE.

If your Lordship is in town in spring, I should be happy if you became acquainted with my friends in Gerrard-street—You would esteem the husband, and honour the wife—she is the reverse of most her sex—They have various pursuits—she but one—that of pleasing her husband.

L E T T E R CIX.

TO A. L-E, ESQ.

DEAR L.

Coxwold, Dec. 7, 1767.

I SAID I would not perhaps write any more, but it would be unkind not to reply to so interesting a letter as yours—I am certain you may depend upon my Lord—'s promises—he will take care of you in the best manner he can, and your knowledge of the world, and of languages in particular, will make you use-

X :

ful in any department — If his Lordship's scheme does not succeed, leave the kingdom — go to the east or the west, for travelling would be of infinite service to both your body and mind—But more of this when we meet—now to my own affairs. —I have had an offer of exchanging two pieces of preferment I hold here, for a living of three hundred and fifty pounds a year in Surrey, about thirty miles from London, and retaining Coxwold and my prebendaryship—the country also is sweet—but I will not, cannot come to any determination, till I have consulted with you and my other friends.—I have great offers too in Ireland — The bishops of C— — and R— — are both my friends—but I have rejected every proposal, unless Mrs. S—and my Lydia could accompany me thither—I live for the sake of my girl, and with her sweet light burden in my arms, I could get up fast the hill of preferment, if I chose it—but without my Lydia, if a mitre was offered me, it would sit uneasy upon my brow.—Mrs. S—'s health is insupportable in England.—She must return to France, and justice and hu-

manity forbid me to oppose it—I will allow her enough to live comfortably, until she can rejoin me.—My heart bleeds, L—e, when I think of parting with my child—'twill be like the separation of soul and body—and equal to nothing but what passes at that tremendous moment; and like it in one respect, for she will be in one kingdom, whilst I am in another.—You will laugh at my weakness—but I cannot help it—for she is a dear, disinterested girl—As a proof of it—when she left Coxwold, and I bade her adieu, I pulled out my purse and offered her ten guineas for her private pleasures—Her answer was pretty, and affected me too much. „No, my dear papa, our expences of coming from France may have straitened you—I would rather put an hundred guineas in your pocket than take ten out of it”—I burst into tears—But why do I practise on your feelings, by dwelling on a subject that will touch your heart?—It is too much melted already by its own sufferings, L—e, for me to add a pang, or cause a single sigh.—God bless you—I shall hope to greet you by New-year's-day in

perfect health—Adieu, my dear friend—I
am most truly and cordially yours,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R CX.

TO MR. AND MRS. J—.

York, Dec. 23, 1767.

I WAS afraid that either Mr. or Mrs. J—, or their little blossom, was drooping—or that some of you were ill, by not having the pleasure of a line from you, and was thinking of writing again to inquire after you all—when I was cast down myself with a fever, and bleeding at my lungs, which had confined me to my room near three weeks—when I had the favour of your's, which till to-day I have not been able to thank you both kindly for, as I most cordially now do—as well as for all your professions and proofs of good-will to me.—I will not say I have not balanced accounts with you in this. — All I know is, that I honour and value you more than I do any good creatures upon earth—and that I could not wish

your happiness, and the success of whatever conduces to it, more than I do, was I your brother—But, good God! are we not all brothers and sisters who are friendly, virtuous, and good? Surely, my dear friends, my illness has been a sort of sympathy for afflictions upon the score of your dear little one.—I am worn down to a shadow—but as my fever has left me, I set off the latter end of next week with my friend Mr. Hall for town—I need not tell my friends in Gerrard-street, I shall do myself the honour to visit them, before either Lord——or Lord——, etc. etc.—I thank you, my dear friend, for what you say so kindly about my daughter—it shews your good heart, for as she is a stranger, 'tis a free gift in you—but when she is known to you, she shall win it fairly—But, alas! when this event is to happen, is in the clouds.—Mrs. S—has hired a house ready furnished at York till she returns to France, and my Lydia must not leave her.—

What a sad scratch of a letter!—but I am weak, my dear friends, both in body and mind—so God bless you—You will

see me enter like a ghost—so I tell you before-hand not to be frightened.—I am, my dear friends, with the truest attachment and esteem, ever yours,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R CXI.

TO LADY P.

Mount Coffee-house, Tuesday 3 o'clock.

THERE is a strange mechanical effect produced in writing a billet-doux within a stone-cast of the lady who engrosses the heart and soul of an inamorato—For this cause (but mostly because I am to dine in this neighbourhood) have I, Tristram Shandy, come forth from my lodgings to a coffee-house the nearest I could find to my dear Lady——'s house, and have called for a sheet of gilt paper, to try the truth of this article of my creed—Now for it—

O my dear lady—what a disclosure of a soul hast thou made of me!—I think, by the bye, this is a little too familiar an introduction for so unfamiliar a situation as I stand in with you—where, heaven knows,

I am kept at a distance—and despair of getting one inch nearer you, with all the steps and windings I can think of to recommend myself to you—Would not any man in his senses run diametrically from you—and as far as his legs would carry him, rather than thus causelessly, foolishly, and fool-hardily expose himself afresh—and afresh, where his heart and his reason tells him he shall be sure to come off loser, if not totally undone?—Why would you tell me you would be glad to see me?—Does it give you pleasure to make me more unhappy—or does it add to your triumph, that your eyes and lips have turned a man into a fool, whom the rest of the town is courting as a wit?—I am a fool—the weakest, the most ductile, the most tender fool, that ever woman tried the weakness of—and the most unsettled in my purposes and resolutions of recovering my right mind.—It is but an hour ago that I kneeled down and swore I never would come near you—and after saying my Lord's Prayer for the sake of the close, *of not being led into temptation*—out I sallied, like any Christian hero,

ready to take the field against the world, the flesh, and the devil; not doubting but I should finally trample them all down under my feet—and now I am got so near you—within this vile stone's cast of your house—I feel myself drawn into a vortex, that has turned my brain upside downwards; and though I had purchased a box ticket to carry me to Miss *****'s benefit, yet I know very well, that was a single line directed to me, to let me know Lady——would be alone at seven, and suffer me to spend the evening with her, she would infallibly see every thing verified I have told her—I dine at Mr. C——r's in Wigmore-street, in this neighbourhood, where I shall stay till seven, in hopes you purpose to put me to this proof. If I hear nothing by that time, I shall conclude you are better disposed of—and shall take a sorry hack, and sorrily jog on to the play—Curse on the word! I know nothing but sorrow—except this one thing, that I love you (perhaps foolishly, but)

Most sincerely.

L. STERNE.

LETTER CXII.

TO MR. AND MRS. J—.

Old Bond-street, Jan. 1.

NOT knowing whether the moisture of the weather will permit me to give my kind friends in Gerrard-street a call this morning for five minutes—I beg leave to send them all the good wishes, compliments, and respects I owe them. I continue to mend, and doubt not but this, with all other evils and uncertainties of life, will end for the best. I send all compliments to your fire-side this Sunday night—Miss Ascough the wise, Miss Pigot the witty, your daughter the pretty, and so on.—If Lord O— is with you, I beg my dear Mrs. J— will present the inclosed to him—'twill add to the millions of obligations I already owe you.—I am sorry that I am no subscriber to Soho this season—it deprives me of a pleasure worth twice the subscription—but I am just going to send about this quarter of the town, to see if it is not too late to procure a

ticket, undisposed of, from some of my Soho friends; and if I can succeed, I will either send or wait upon you with it by half an hour after three to-morrow—if not, my friends will do me the justice to believe me truly miserable.—I am half engaged, or more, for dinner on Sunday next, but will try to get disengaged in order to be with my friends.—If I cannot, I will glide like a shadow uninvited to Gerrard-street some day this week, that we may eat our bread and meat in love and peace together—God bless you both! —I am with the most sincere regard,

Your ever obliged,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R CXIII.

TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

Old Bond-street, Monday.

I HAVE never been a moment at rest since I wrote yesterday about this Soho ticket—I have been at a Secretary of

State to get one—have been upon one knee to my friends Sir G—M— —,—Mr. Lascelles—and Mr. Fitzmaurice— ——without mentioning five more— ——I believe I could as soon get you a place at court, for every body is going—But I will go out and try a new circle—and if you do not hear from me by a quarter after three, you may conclude I have been unfortunate in my supplications.—I send you this state of the affair, lest my silence should make you think I had neglected what I promised—But no—Mrs. J— ——knows me better, and would never suppose it would be out of head of one who is with so much truth

Her faithful friend,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R CXIV.

TO THE SAME.

Thursday, Old Bond-street.

A THOUSAND thanks, and as many excuses, my dear friends, for the trouble my blunder has given you. By a second

note I am astonished I could read Saturday for Sunday, or make any mistake in a card wrote by Mrs. J—s, in which my friend is as unrivalled as in a hundred greater excellencies.

I am now tied down neck and heels (twice over) by engagements every day this week, or most joyfully would I have trod the old pleasing road from Bond to Gerrard-street.—My books will be to be had on Thursday, but possibly on Wednesday in the afternoon.—I am quite well, but exhausted with a room full of company every morning till dinner.—How do I lament I cannot eat my morsel (which is always sweet) with such kind friends!—The Sunday following I will assuredly wait upon you both—and will come a quarter before four, that I may have both a little time, and a little day-light, to see Mrs. J—'s picture.—I beg leave to assure my friends of my gratitude for all their favours, with my sentimental thanks for every token of their good-will.—Adieu, my dear friends—

I am truly your's,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R CXV.

TO L. S—N. ESQ.

DEAR SIR,

Old Bond-street, Wednesdays.

YOUR commendations are very flattering. I know no one whose judgment I think more highly of, but your partiality for me is the only instance in which I can call it in question.—Thanks, my good Sir, for the prints—I am much your debtor for them—If I recover from my ill state of health, and live to revisit Cox would this summer, I will decorate my study with them, along with six beautiful pictures I have already of the sculptures on poor Ovid's tomb which were executed on marble at Rome.—It grieves one to think such a man should have died in exile, who wrote so well on the art of love.—Do not think me encroaching if I solicit a favour—'tis either to borrow or beg (to beg if you please) some of those touched with chalk which you brought from Italy—I believe you have three sets, and if

you can spare the imperfect one of cattle on coloured paper, 'twill answer my purpose, which is namely this, to give a friend of ours.—You may be ignorant she has a genius for drawing, and whatever she excels in, she conceals, and her humility adds lustre to her accomplishments.—I presented her last year with colours and an apparatus for painting, and gave her several lessons before I left town.—I wish her to follow this art, to be a complete mistress of it—and it is singular enough, but not more singular than true, that she does not know how to make a cow or a sheep, though she draws figures and landscapes perfectly well; which makes me wish her to copy from good prints.—If you come to town next week, and dine where I am engaged next Sunday, call upon me and take me with you—I breakfast with Mr. Beauclerc, and am engaged for an hour afterwards with Lord O—; so let our meeting be either at your house or my lodgings—Do not be late, for we will go half an hour before dinner, to see a picture executed by West most admirably—He has caught the character of our

friend—such goodness is painted in that face, that when one looks at it, let the soul be ever so much unharmonized, it is impossible it should remain so.—I will send you a set of my books—they will take with the generality—the women will read this book in the parlour, and Tristram in the bed-chamber.—Good night, dear Sir—I am going to take my whey, and then to bed. Believe me

Your's most truly,

L. STERNE.)

L E T T E R CXVI.

MY DEAREST LYDIA,

February 20, Old Bond-street.

MY Sentimental Journey, you say, is admired in York by every one—and 'tis not vanity in me to tell you that it is no less admired here—But what is the gratification of my feelings on this occasion?—The want of health bows me down, and vanity harbours not in thy father's breast—This vile influenza—be not alarmed! I think I shall get the better of it—and

Sterne's Letters.

Y

shall be with you both the first of May—
And if I escape, 'twill not be for a long
period, my child—unless a quiet retreat
and peace of mind can restore me.—The
subject of thy letter has astonished me.—
She could know but little of my feelings
to tell thee, that under the supposition I
should survive thy mother, I should be-
queath thee as a legacy to— —. No, my
Lydia! 'tis a lady, whose virtues I wish
thee to imitate, that I shall intrust my
girl to—I mean that friend whom I have
so often talked and wrote about—From
her you will learn to be an affectionate
wife, a tender mother, and a sincere friend
—and you cannot be intimate with her,
without her pouring some part of the milk
of human kindness into your breast, which
will serve to check the heat of your own
temper, which you partake in a small de-
gree of.—Nor will that amiable woman
put my Lydia under the painful necessity
to fly to India for protection, whilst it is
in her power to grant her a more power-
ful one in England.—But I think, my
Lydia, that thy mother will survive me—
do not deject her spirits with thy appre-

ensions on my account.—I have sent you a necklace, buckles, and the same to your mother.—My girl cannot form a wish that is in the power of a father, that he will not gratify her in—and I cannot in justice be less kind to thy mother.—I am never alone—The kindness of my friends is ever the same—I wish though I had thee to nurse me—but I am denied that.—Write to me twice a week at least.—God bless thee, my child, and believe me ever, ever thy

Affectionate father,

L. S.

LETTER CXVII.

TO MRS. J—.

Tuesday.

YOUR poor friend is scarce able to write—he has been at death's door this week with a pleurisy—I was bled three times on Thursday, and blistered on Friday—The physician says I am better—God knows, for I feel myself sadly wrong, and shall, if I recover, be a long while

Y :

of gaining strength.—Before I have gone thro' half this letter, I must stop to rest my weak hand above a dozen times.—Mr. J — — — was so good to call upon me yesterday. I felt emotions not to be described at the sight of him, and he overjoyed me by talking a great deal of you.—Do, dear Mrs. J — —, entreat him to come to-morrow, or next day, for perhaps I have not many days, or hours, to live.—I want to ask a favour of him, if I find myself worse—that I shall beg of you, if in this wrestling I come off conqueror—My spirits are fled—'Tis a bad omen—Do not weep, my dear Lady—your tears are too precious to be shed for me—bottle them up, and may the cork never be drawn.—Dearest, kindest, gentlest, and best of women! may health, peace, and happiness prove your handmaids.—If I die, cherish the remembrance of me, and forget the follies which you so often condemned—which my heart, not my head betrayed me into. Should my child, my Lydia want a mother, may I hope you will (if she is left parentless) take her to your bosom?—You are the

only woman on earth I can depend upon for such a benevolent action.—I wrote to her a fortnight ago, and told her what I trust she will find in you.—Mr. J—— will be a father to her—he will protect her from every insult, for he wears a sword which he has served his country with, and which he would know how to draw out of the scabbard in defence of innocence—Commend me to him—as I now commend you to that Being who takes under his care the good and kind part of the world.—Adieu—all grateful thanks to you and Mr. J—.

Your poor affectionate friend,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R CXVIII.

TO MR. B.

S I R,

Exeter, July, 1775.

THIS was quite an *Impromptu* of Yorick's after he had been thoroughly *soused*.—He drew it up in a few moments

without stopping his pen. I should be glad to see it in your intended collection of Sterne's Memoirs, etc. If you should have a copy of it, you will be able to rectify a misapplication of a term that Mr. Sterne could never be guilty of, as one great excellence of his writing lies in the most happy choice of metaphors and allusions—such as shewed his philosophic judgment, at the same time that they displayed his wit and genius——but it is not for me to comment on or correct so great an original. I should have sent this Fragment as soon as I saw Mrs. Medalle's advertisement, had I not been at a distance from my papers. I expect much entertainment from this posthumous work of a man to whom no one is more indebted for amusement and instruction, than,

Sir,

Your humble servant,

S. P.

A N I M P R O M P T U.

NO—not one farthing would I give for such a coat in wet weather or dry.—If the sun shines, you are sure of being melted, because it closes so tight about one—if it rains, it is no more a defence than a cobweb—a very sieve, o' my conscience! that lets through every drop, and like many other things that are put on only for a cover, mortifies you with disappointment, and makes you curse the impostor, when it is too late to avail one's self of the discovery. Had I been wise, I should have examined the claim the coat had to the title of „defender of the body”—before I had trusted my body in it—I should have held it up to the light, like other suspicious matters to have seen, how much it was likely to admit of that which I wanted to keep out—whether it was more than such a frail, flimsy contexture of flesh and blood as I am fated to carry about with me through every tract of this dirty world, could have

comfortably and safely dispensed with in so short a journey—taking into my account the chance of spreading trees—thick hedges overhanging the road—with twenty other coverts that a man may thrust his head under—if he is not violently pushed on by that d—d stimulus—you know where—that will not let a man sit still in one place for half a minute together—but like a young nettlesome tit is eternally on the fret, and is for pushing on still farther—Or if the poor scared devil is not hunted tantivy by a hue and cry with gyves and a halter dangling before his eyes—now in either case he has not a minute to throw away in standing still, but like king Lear must brave „the peltings of a pitiless storm,” and give heaven leave to „rumble its belly full—spit fire—or spout rain”—as spitefully as it pleaseth, without finding the inclination or the resolution to slacken his pace, lest something should be lost that might have been gained, or more gotten than he well knows how to get rid of—Now had I acted with as much prudence as some other good folks—I could name ma-

ny of them who have been made b—ps within my remembrance for having been hooded and muffled up in a larger quantity of this dark drab of mental manufacture than ever fell to my share—and absolutely for nothing else—as will be seen when they are undressed another day—had I had but as much as might have been taken out of their cloth without lessening much of the size, or injuring in the least the shape, or contracting aught of the doublings and foldings, or confining to a less circumference the superb sweep of any one cloak that any one b—p ever wrapt himself up in—I should never have given this coat a place upon my shoulders. I should have seen by the light at one glance, how little it would keep out of rain, by how little it would keep in of darkness—This a coat for a rainy day! Do pray, Madam, hold it up to that window—Did you ever see such an *illustrious* coat since the day you could distinguish between a coat and a pair of breeches?—My lady did not understand derivatives, and so she could not see quite through my splendid pun. Pope Sixtus would have

blinded her with the same „darkness of excessive light.” What a flood of it breaks in thro’ this rent? what an irradiation beams through that? what twinklings—what sparklings, as you wave it before your eyes in the broad face of the sun? Make a fan out of it for the ladies to look at their gallants with at church—It has not served me for one purpose—it will serve them for two—This is coarse stuff—of worse manufacture than the cloth—put it to its proper use, for I love when things sort and join well—Make a philtre * of it—while there is a drop to be extracted—I know but one thing in the world that will draw, drain, or suck like it—and that is—neither wool nor flax—Make

* This allusion is improper. A philtre originally signifies a love potion—and it is used as a noun from the verb *philtrate*—It must signify a *strainer*, not a *sucker*—cloth is sometimes used for the purpose of *draining* by means of its pores or capillary tubes, but its action is contrary to *filtration*. His meaning is obvious enough; but as he drew up this Fragment without stopping his pen, as I was informed, it is no wonder he erred in the application of some of his terms.

—make any thing of it, but a vile, hypocritical coat for me—for I never can say *sub Jove* (whatever Juno might) that „it is a pleasure to *be wet*.”

L. STERNE.

*End of the Letters published by Mrs.
Medalle.*

THE FRAGMENT.

C H A P. I.

Shewing two Things; first, what a Rabelaic Fellow LONGINUS RABELAICUS is, and secondly, how cavalierly he begins his Book.

MY dear and thrice reverend brethren, as well archbishop and bishops, as the *rest* of the inferior clergy! would it not be a glorious thing, if any man of genius and capacity amongst us for such a work, was fully bent within himself, to sit down immediately and compose a thorough-fitted system of the KERUKOPAEDIA, fairly setting forth, to the best of his wit and memory, and collecting for that purpose all that is needful to be known, and understood of that art?—Of what art cried PANURGE? Good God! answered LONGINUS (making an exclamation, but taking care at the same time to moderate

his voice) why, of the art of making all kinds of your theological, hebdomodical, rostrummical, humdrummical what d'ye call 'ems—I will be shot, quoth EPISTEMON, if all this story of thine of a roasted horse, is simply no more than S——Sausages? quoth PANURGE. Thou hast fallen twelve feet and about five inches below the mark, answered EPISTEMON, for I hold them to be *Sermons*—which said word, (as I take the matter) being but a word of low degree, for a book of high rhetoric — LONGINUS RABELAICUS was foreminded to usher and lead into his dissertation, with as much pomp and parade as he could afford; and for my own part, either I know no more of Latin than my horse, or the KERUKOPAEDIA is nothing but the art of making 'em—And why not, quoth GYMNAST, of preaching them when we have done?—Believe me, dear souls, this is half in half—and if some skilful body would but put us in a way to do this to some *tune*—Thou wouldst not have them *chanted* surely? quoth TRIBOULET, laughing.—No, nor *canted* neither! quoth GYMNAST, crying—but what I mean,

my friends, says LONGINUS RABELAICUS (who is certainly one of the greatest critics in the western world, and as Rabelaic a fellow as ever existed) what I mean, says he, interrupting them both and resuming his discourse, is this, that if all the scattered rules of the KERUKOPAEDIA could be but once carefully collected into one code, as thick as PANURGE's head, and the whole *cleanly* digested—(pooh, says Panurge, who felt himself aggrieved) and bound up, continued Longinus, by way of a regular institute, and then put into the hands of every licensed preacher in Great Britain, and Ireland, just before he began to compose, I maintain it—I deny it flatly, quoth PANURGE—What? answered LONGINUS RABELAICUS with all the temper in the world.

C H A P. II.

In which the Reader will begin to form a Judgment, of what an Historical, Grammatical, Anecdotal, Allegorical, and Comical Kind of a Work he has got hold of.

HOMENAS who had to preach next Sunday (before God knows whom) knowing nothing at all of the matter—was all this while at it as hard as he could drive in the very next room:—for having fouled two clean sheets of his own, and being quite stuck fast in the entrance upon his third general *division*, and finding himself unable to get either forwards or backwards with any grace—,,Curse it,” says he, (thereby excommunicating every mother’s son who should think differently) ,,why may not a man lawfully call in for help in this, as well as any other human emergency?”—So without any more argumentation, except starting up and nimming down from the top shelf but one,

the second volume of CLARK—tho' without any felonious intention in so doing, he had begun to clap me in (making a joint first) five whole pages, nine round paragraphs, and a dozen and a half of good thoughts all of a row; and because there was a confounded high gallery—was transcribing it away like a little devil. — Now — quoth HOMENAS to himself, „tho' I hold all this to be fair and square, yet, if I am found out, there will be the deuce and all to pay.” — *Why are the bells ringing backwards, you lad? what is all that crowd about, honest man? HOMENAS was got upon Doctor CLARK'S back, sir — and what of that, my lad? Why an please you, he has broke his neck, and fractured his skull, and befouled himself into the bargain, by a fall from the pulpit two stories high. Alas! poor HOMENAS! HOMENAS has done his business! — HOMENAS will never preach more while breath is in his body. — No, faith, I shall never again be able to tickle it off as I have done. I may sit up whole winter nights baking my blood with hectic watchings, and write as solid as a*

FATHER of the church——or, I may sit down whole summer days evaporating my spirits into the finest thoughts, and write as florid as a MOTHER of it.—In a word, I may compose myself off my legs, and preach till I burst—and when I have done, it will be worse than if not done at all.—*Pray Mr. Such-a-one, who held forth last Sunday? Doctor CLARK, I trow; says one. Pray what Doctor CLARK? says a second. Why HOMENAS's Doctor CLARK, quoth a third. O rare HOMENAS! cries a fourth; your servant Mr. HOMENAS, quoth a fifth.*—'Twill be all over with me, by Heav'n—I may as well put the book from whence I took it.—Here HOMENAS burst into a flood of tears, which falling down helter skelter, ding dong without any kind of intermission for six minutes and almost twenty five seconds, had a marvellous effect upon his discourse; for the aforesaid tears, do you mind, did so temper the wind that was rising upon the aforesaid discourse, but falling for the most part perpendicularly, and hitting the spirits at right angles, which were mounting horizontally all over the surface of his ha-

range, they not only played the devil and all with the sublimity—but moreover the said tears, by their nitrous quality, did so refrigerate, precipitate, and hurry down to the bottom of his soul, all the unsavory particles which lay fermenting (as you saw) in the middle of his conception, that he went on in the coolest and chafed stile (for a *soliloquy* I think) that ever mortal man uttered.

„This is really and truly a very hard case, continued HOMENAS to himself”—PANURGE, by the bye, and all the company in the next room hearing all along every syllable he spoke; for you must know, that notwithstanding PANURGE had opened his mouth as wide as he could for his blood, in order to give a round answer to LONGINUS RABELAICUS's interrogation, which concluded the last chapter—yet HOMENAS's rhetoric had poured in so like a torrent, flap-dash thro' the wainscot amongst them, and happening at that *uncritical* crisis, when PANURGE had just put his ugly face into the above-said posture of defence—that he stopt short—he did indeed, and tho' his head was

full of matter, and he had screwed up every nerve and muscle belonging to it, till all cryed *crack* again, in order to give a due projectile force to what he was going to let fly, full in LONGINUS RABELAICUS's teeth who sat over against him.—Yet for all that, he had the continence to contain himself, for he stopt short, I say, without uttering one word except, Z....ds—many reasons may be assigned for this, but the most true, the most strong, the most hydrostatical, and the most philosophical reason, why PANURGE did not go on, was—that the forementioned *torrent* did so *drown* his voice, that he had none left to go on with.—God help him, poor fellow! so he stopt short, (as I have told you before) and all the time HOMENAS was speaking he said not another word, good or bad, but stood gaping, and staring, like what you please—so that the break, marked thus—which HOMENAS's grief had made in the middle of his discourse, which he could no more help than he could fly—produced no other change in the room where LONGINUS RABELAICUS, EPISTEMON, GYMNAST, TRIBOULET,

and nine or ten more honest blades had got Kerukopaedizing together, but that it gave time to GYMNAST to give PANURGE a good squashing chuck under his double chin; which PANURGE taking in good part, and just as it was meant by GYMNAST, he forthwith shut his mouth—and gently sitting down upon a stool though somewhat excentrically and of neighbours row, but listening, as all the rest did, with might and main, they plainly and distinctly heard every syllable of what you will find recorded in the very next chapter.

End of the first Volume.

Sterne, Laurence, 1713-1768

Letters of the late Rev. Mr. Laurence Sterne, to his most intimate friends,
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